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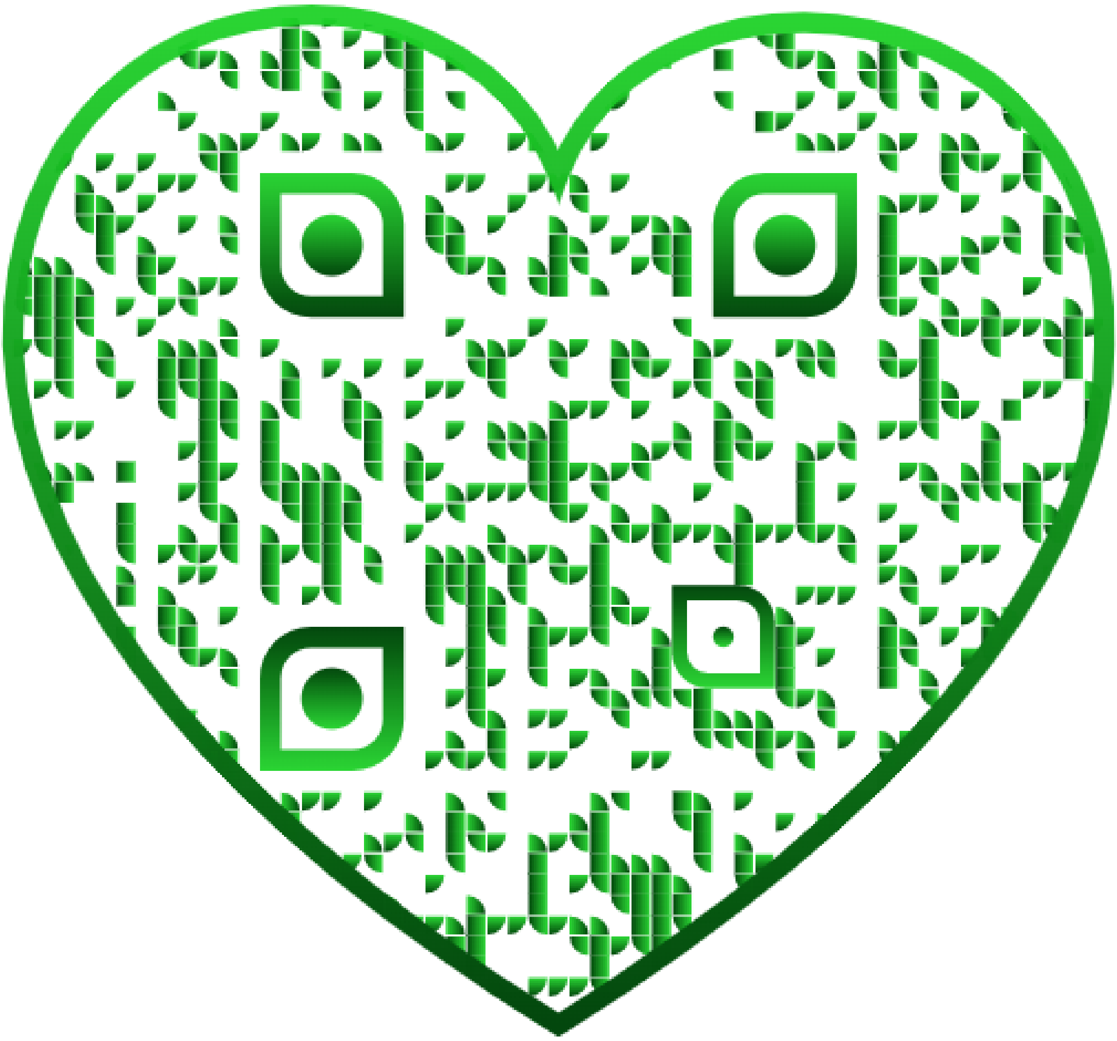

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Welcome

What is 'British photography'? Is it about the colour of the photographer's passport, or more about their sharp insight into British life and culture? How do they regard us across the Channel? Peter Dench went to find out when he, along with Martin Parr, Don McCullin and others, were invited to participate in an exhibition in France dedicated in part to British photography. Peter's report is a fascinating and entertaining read. Also this week we head across the pond to visit the cowboys of the American West; take a look at DxO PureRAW; and test the confusingly named Panasonic Lumix S1IIE. Don't forget to get your tickets for our upcoming live event dedicated to award-winning documentary photography. Details on page 38.

Nigel Atherton, Editor

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COVER PICTURE © PETER DENCH. INSET, ABOVE: © ROD LAWTON. INSET, BELOW: © JIM KRANTZ

Our cover photo was taken by Peter Dench and depicts health worker Neale with wife Rosalie taking a walk on Whitby Pier

THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

PETER DENCH
Acting Features Ed

Peter meets his photographic heroes at Europe's largest open-air photo event

ROD LAWTON

Editing expert Rod Lawton shares some essential enhancements when working with raw files

ANDY WESTLAKE
Technical Editor

Our chief reviewer conducts an in-depth test of the Panasonic Lumix S1IIE camera

JOSHUA WALLER
Online Editor

Expert reviewer Joshua assesses the Samsung Galaxy S24 FE smartphone

DAMIEN DEMOLDER

Former AP editor Damien tests the low-cost Colbor CineFlare CF5 smoke machine

JESSICA MILLER
Dep Online Editor

Jessica quizzes readers on page 40 and also picks out great reader shots on page 42

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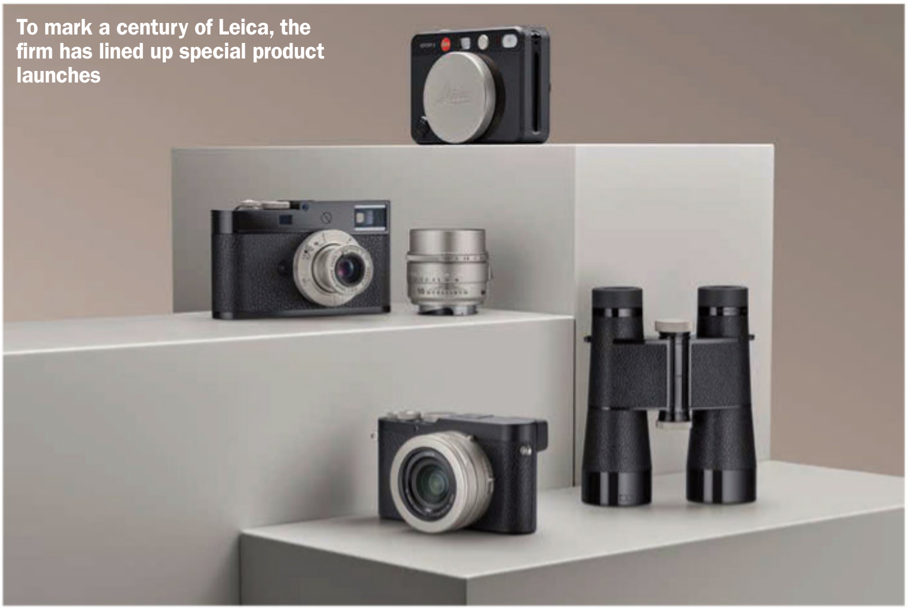

To mark a century of Leica, the firm has lined up special product launches

Leica celebrates its centenary with Special Edition cameras

LEICA has celebrated its hundredth year of continuous camera production with the launch of three '100 Years of Leica' special edition cameras. These include the D-Lux 8 advanced zoom compact, the Sofort 2 hybrid instant camera, and the Leica M11-D rangefinder. All three feature black bodies and nickel-coloured anodised details that pay homage to the original Leica I, the world's first practical 35mm camera which was first produced in 1925.

Looking first at the Leica Sofort 2 100 Years of Leica, like the standard model this produces instant prints from a small built-in digital camera, with creative filters and effects available. However, it gains a '100' logo on the top plate and comes with a nickel-coloured lens cap. It's on sale now for £425.

Secondly, the Leica D-Lux 8 100 Years of Leica special edition gets a distinctive design makeover, with nickel-coloured top-plate controls, and a matching lens barrel and lens controls. Elsewhere it retains the same specifications as before, with a 17MP Four Thirds sensor, 24-75mm equivalent f/1.7-2.8 zoom lens, and built-in electronic viewfinder and touchscreen. It's available to buy now from Leica's website for £1,600.

M11-D Centenary Set

Third up is the Leica M11-D 100 Years of Leica, of which 100 units will be produced in a special Centenary Set. This includes two lenses in a nickel-coloured finish: the current Leica Summilux-M 50 f/1.4 ASPH, and the Leitz Anastigmat-M 50 f/3.5, a 'modern interpretation' of Leica's first camera lens, as used on the Leica I. Notably, the first set features the serial number 6000000, and is both the millionth Leica M camera produced, and the firm's six-millionth overall.

As for the camera itself, it's based on the M11-D rangefinder, with a 60MP full-frame sensor and no LCD screen on the back. The special edition boasts top and bottom plates made from solid brass, with a glossy black paint finish and nickel-coloured top controls. The strap lugs have been omitted, as has the usual Leica top-plate engraving. Instead, there's a discreet 'Ernst Leitz Wetzlar' on a conical collar around the shutter release. A specially matched leather case and strap complete the set.

The Leica M11-D 100 Years of Leica Centenary Set will be available exclusively from select Leica stores. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the price hasn't been disclosed.

Along with the cameras, Leica has also revealed a special edition of its Trinovid 10x40 binoculars. These boast a hand-polished black-anodised housing and nickel-coloured accents. Again, only 100 units will be produced.

© JOEL MEYEROWITZ

Major Meyerowitz exhibition

ALSO in celebration of Leica's centenary, the firm is showing an exhibition of famed American photographer Joel Meyerowitz's work at its headquarters in Wetzlar, Germany. Titled The Pleasure of Seeing, the 100 photos on display were selected by the man himself, and span everything from his early street work through to recent previously unseen self-portraits. The exhibition is on until 21 September.

Self-portrait, Tuscany 2020. From the exhibition, Joel Meyerowitz: The Pleasure of Seeing. Ernst Leitz Museum, Wetzlar 2025

100 Leica Stories

FOR those whose means don't stretch to special edition cameras, Leica has published a book to mark the Leica I's anniversary. Across 320 pages, it 'chronicles personal moments, iconic photographs, groundbreaking technical achievements and behind-the-scenes perspectives that weave together a century of Leica's history'. It's due to be available from 14 July from Leica stores, the Leica Online Store, and the LFI Online Store, for £50.

100
LEICA STORIES

The *100 Leica Stories* book marks the Leica 1's centenary

The six-million-pound camera

ROUNDING off this week's celebration of all things Leica is news of the second-most expensive camera ever sold. At the 46th Leitz Photographica Auction in Wetzlar, a prototype '0-series' Leica with serial number 112 sold for €7,200,000, which equates to about £6,200,000. According to the firm's records, this camera was originally delivered to its inventor, Oskar Barnack. The overall record remains with Barnack's personal 0-series camera, No. 105, which sold for €14,400,000 in 2022.

© LEICA CAMERA AG

Prototype '0-series' Leica, No 112

Viewpoint
Isabella Ruffatti

This is the reason I prefer budget phones for photography, Isabella Ruffatti explains

As a phone reviewer, I've tested both budget phones and more high-end phones, from brands like Motorola, Honor, and Vivo. Most have had flat screens. But one in particular sticks out for me: the Motorola Edge 50 Pro. The photos and videos I took with it were crisp, just the right amount of vibrant and beautiful. That is, the photos and videos I managed to take.

The Motorola Edge 50 Pro, 40 Neo, as well as the newer Edge 60 Pro have a curved screen. They look amazing and give these phones a fancier look than the budget flat screen phones.

Problem is, they aren't very practical. I took the Edge 50 Pro and another phone to the studio and quickly realised that the 50 Pro was not very good for studio photography; or photography in general.

This had nothing to do with specs, but its curved screen. I had the phone on a tripod at first, which went around the phone and gripped it at its sides, which were mostly taken over by the curved screen. The phone kept exiting the camera app, making me miss several photos, which proved very frustrating.

Keep smiling?

Holding the phone in my hands did not improve the situation. This is absolutely a problem if you're trying to capture family moments as you ask your subjects to keep smiling into the camera as you scamper trying to reopen the camera app and not touch the curved screen.

As a photographer who likes taking street photos and unposed portraits, this was a complete nightmare. The feeling of wanting to throw your phone across the room is not a pleasant one, especially one that has a more premium cost. I don't know about you but I'd much rather buy a budget phone with a practical design and decent enough camera than a more premium phone whose fancy screen design will make it nearly impossible to use its excellent camera.

With a flat screen, composing your shot is actually a much easier and calmer process. You don't have to worry about accidentally touching the sides of the screen and being booted out of the camera app. You can clearly see the edges of your photo, without any distortion and the colours shifting caused by the screen curving away.

Whether you've got more money to spend or not, get a budget phone with a flat screen! The budget Google Pixel phones like the Pixel 9A are great options as they blend decent quality with affordability. Most important, they all now have flat screens, even the flagships.

Motorola giving the Edge 60 Pro a curved screen is a real shame. It's got a superb camera, but its curved screen makes it a photographer's worst enemy. Please, please, please Motorola – bin the curved screen and give the Edge 70 Pro a flat screen!

motorola
edge 50 PRO

The Motorola Edge 50 Pro, which has a curved screen

Former AP writer Isabella Ruffatti is a freelance journalist, photographer and content creator.

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the email address on page 3 and win a year's digital subscription to AP.

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Frontier

by Jim Krantz

£75, GOST, hardcover, 144 pages, 98 images, 258x350mm Portrait: ISBN 978-1-915423-57-3

Frontier, the latest cinematic sweep from American photographer Jim Krantz, lassos the myths of the cowboy and rides it straight into the dust-blown heart of the American West. This ain't just a book – it's a widescreen, sun-scorched dream of grit, heritage, and hallelujah light, says **Peter Dench**

Jim Krantz isn't playing cowboy; he is one, at least in spirit. Raised on stories of stockyards and Ansel Adams, he's turned decades of photography into a love letter to the frontier and those who live it. And boy, does he deliver. Each image feels like a scene from an epic Western: silent, solitary figures on horseback framed against cloud-heavy skies and endless horizons. The drama's in the details: a rope caught mid-whirl, dust catching the morning light, horses standing like sculptures carved from the land itself. This is visual storytelling at its most evocative.

Frontier blends cinematic portraits of cowboys and expansive landscapes with experimental works – reworked with light and a variety of experimental materials from resin to wet paint – to create a visual representation of the mythical American West.

Krantz's cowboys don't pose – they inhabit. The landscapes don't just sit pretty – they breathe, stretch and shimmer with the kind of luminosity that

makes you squint. His palette is painterly, his compositions precise. He's not chasing action, but atmosphere – capturing the stillness between gallops, the poetry between the cracks.

Art critic David Pagel's accompanying essay riffs philosophically on the book's theme, calling *Frontier* a 'symphony of light and shadow', a place where 'dreams collide with reality.' And while that might drift a bit into art-speak, it's hard to argue. Krantz isn't showing us the West as it was, or even is, but how it feels – timeless, taut, and tinged with reverence.

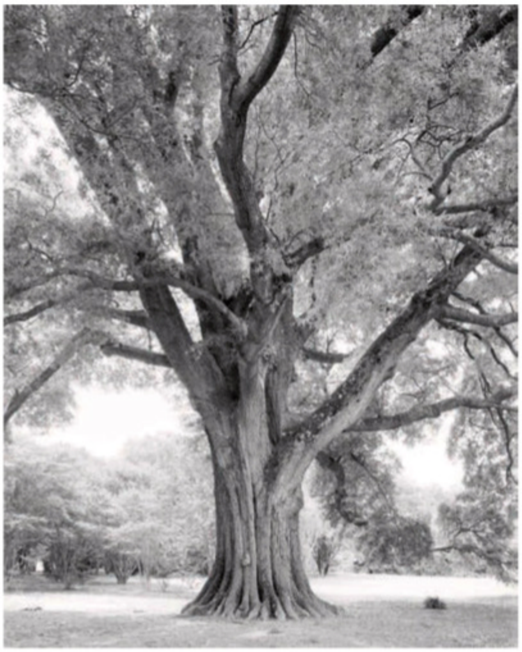
Credit, too, to the production team at GOST Books. The design is bold but uncluttered, letting the images breathe. Retouching and colour grading by James Digby-Jones adds cinematic polish without tipping into cliché.

In *Frontier,* Krantz rides a fine line between documentary and daydream, forging a photography book that's as much about legacy as it is about landscape. This isn't a nostalgia trip; it's a visual hymn to resilience, freedom, and the untamed spirit that still rides beneath the wide-open sky.

Yeehaw, indeed.

Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography



Great Willow Oak by Amanda Sauer

£55 (€65), L'Artiere Edizioni, hardcover, 68 pages, ISBN: 979-12-809781-58

Amanda Sauer's *Giant Willow Oak* is a quietly powerful body of work that explores the relationship between people and place through the enduring presence of a single tree. With a first edition of 500, the book strikes a balance between accessibility and artful production, offering a considered reflection on nature, memory, and permanence.

Centred on a mature willow oak tree located near Sauer's home, the series unfolds through a lyrical sequence of black & white photographs. She circles the tree counterclockwise, mirroring the Earth's rotation. Sauer's visual language is restrained and meditative. Her approach evokes the tree not only as a physical landmark, but as an emotional and symbolic anchor, tied to themes of care, continuity, and rootedness.

The design of the book complements the subject: simple yet thoughtful, allowing Sauer's images space to breathe. The quiet pacing encourages slow looking, and the sequencing invites personal reflection as much as narrative understanding.

Giant Willow Oak is a poetic meditation on a singular subject that opens out into broader questions about how we inhabit and connect to the world around us. It's an understated but resonant addition to the growing canon of landscape and autobiographical photo books.

Grace

by Scott Offen

£50 (€60), L'Artiere Edizioni, hardcover, 72 pages: ISBN: 979-12-80978-14-1

Photographer Scott Offen's *Grace* is a quiet stunner. Set against a majestic woodland backdrop, this book is less about landscape and more about the emotional terrain between artist and subject – who, in this case, happens to be his wife.

Grace is no passive muse. She's a partner in crime, co-conspirator, and creative catalyst. Together, Scott and Grace craft a series of photographs that are at once mythical and deeply personal. One moment, she's a sylvan goddess who's lost in a fairytale forest; the next, a wisp of a presence marked only by a hat on a hook or a shadow on a wall. It's part Cindy Sherman, part Scandinavian folklore, with a sprinkle of dandelion fluff for good measure.

Shot mostly with a view camera, the work is slow and considered – old school in the best way. There's space here: for imagination, for silence, for symbols to shimmer. And while the academic-speak might label it as 'a challenge to gender norms' or 'a reimagining of identity', you don't need to have a PhD to enjoy it. You just need eyes and a little bit of curiosity.

In a world of clickbait and fast takes, *Grace* invites you to pause – and maybe, to see the women in your life not just as they are, but as they could be in a dream.

Small Museum

by Simone Rosenbauer

£45, GOST, hardcover, 192 pages: ISBN 978-1-915423-82-5

Please note, each book has a tipped in image on the back cover – of which there are 35 variations. Copies will be allocated at random

Only in Australia could you find a museum in an abandoned opal mine – or one devoted to apples, housed in a former apple warehouse. Photographer Simone Rosenbauer criss-crossed every single state and territory in search of the country's quirkiest custodians of memory, and *Small Museum* is the result: a visual love letter to the underfunded, over-dedicated institutions where history is preserved with pride and a dash of lunacy.

It's a book that could only come from a place where spiders can kill you and a meat pie counts as a balanced meal. But *Small Museum* is no joke. It's thoughtfully sequenced, typographic in format, and museum-like itself – complete with exhibit numbers. The photographs have that Rosenbauer calm: clinical framing with a quiet pulse of humour. One page gives you a dusty dinosaur bone. Another, a headless mannequin reclining in a lawn chair.

There are vaults full of currency, recreated jail cells, and planetariums with corrugated plastic skies. Elephant foot? Check. Butterfly in a box? You bet. The brilliance lies in how seriously the book takes these oddities – and the people who guard them.

Rosenbauer's portraits of the museum staff – former nurses, surfboard painters, teachers – are full of warmth. These aren't just curators; they're community glue. Each story shared is a small defiance against forgetting.

And look, the Aussies might give us stick about our weather and cricket, but this is our chance to rib them back gently: a whole book about tiny museums in the middle of nowhere? Brilliant. Mad. Heartfelt.

Small Museum is less a photobook, more a time capsule – charming, weird, sincere. Just like Australia.

Above left: Tamworth Historical Society, Tamworth NSW

Above: Land of the Beardies-History House, Glen Innes NSW

Left: Uralla Historical Society, Uralla NSW

Left: The Australian Golf Museum, Bothwell TAS

PETER DENCH
HONNI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE
2025

© MICHELLE DENCH

Don, Dench and the French

It's advised never to meet your heroes – but what about exhibit alongside them? **Peter Dench** heads to the French countryside to find out

© PETER DENCH

Left: Sir Don McCullin and Peter Dench at a tree planting, a symbolic and meaningful La Gacilly Festival tradition and lasting mark of each exhibitor's presence

Above: Don being interviewed by French media

The 2025 edition of Festival Photo in the bucolic village of La Gacilly is gloriously titled SO BRITISH! – a sideways celebration of British photography, featuring some of the genre's most iconic names. Among them: Tony Ray-Jones, Terry O'Neill, Martin Parr, Don McCullin, and, somehow, me.

Established in 2004, the La Gacilly Photo Festival is Europe's largest open-air photography event. From 1 June to 5 October, the festival transforms the village's streets, gardens, and alleys into expansive galleries showcasing large-format photographs. I have 39 of my best of British images in a section adjacent to Ray-Jones and Parr. In addition to the SO BRITISH element there's a focus on environmental and social themes, and it features works from both renowned and emerging photographers worldwide.

As a photographer and long-time admirer of both Parr's eye for the absurd and McCullin's unflinching reportage, sharing wall space (or rather, garden hedge and granite façade space) with them is in equal parts exhilarating and surreal. They say never meet your heroes… what about exhibit alongside them? As only a Brit abroad can – armed with a suitcase full of humour and sprinkling of humility, I grab my alcohol-free, vegan wife Michelle and head to the country famed for its fine wines and cheeses.

I first observed Parr when he was shooting for his book *Common Sense* (1999). I watched in awe as he stuck his lens at a punter at the horse races wearing a top hat speaking on a mobile phone standing next to a red telephone box. Classic Parr. I introduced myself and he invited me to visit at his home in Bristol. A few months later I sat on the floor as he kindly looked through my fledgling portfolio. A decade later I went back to interview him for my book *The Dench Dozen: Great Britons of Photography Volume I* and was upgraded to a beanbag.

Dining with Don

In 2012 Don McCullin swung by my book launch at Les Rencontres d'Arles photography festival. He looked through and said, 'Good. You get close.' Over dinner I suggested we should do a book together on England – 'Dench and Don do England'. He didn't dismiss it, leaned over and said, 'Of course it would have to be Don and Dench do England,' and of course he was right. More recently I visited Don's home in Somerset to film a segment for *The Sunday Times'* documentary film: *200 Years in the Making*.

Attracting over 300,000 visitors annually, Festival Photo La Gacilly offers free access to its exhibitions, emphasising art's role in raising awareness about pressing global issues. In 2018 the festival expanded its reach through a partnership with Baden, Austria, where the previous year's exhibitions are displayed, furthering its mission of combining art, nature, and community engagement.

There are myriad routes from the UK to La Gacilly – ferries depart from Plymouth and Portsmouth, planes fly into Rennes. I opted for the Eurostar via Paris. Nibbling breakfast at the Gare Montparnasse awaiting a train to Redon (pronounced in your most outrageous French accent) I look up at the information boards and cough a flock of croissant flakes. My photograph of Lorraine Churchill waving her Union flag at a street party celebrating Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee looks proudly down.

As I disembark, the sky is the colour of wet slate. We're issued umbrellas and bundled onto the bus with members of the French press for the 15-minute ride to

© JEAN-MICHEL NIRON

© JEAN-MICHEL NIRON

La Gacilly which has a population around the same as the waiting list for my north London tennis club. Parr can't make it due to a commitment in Italy. Don is rumoured to be arriving soon.

There must be 800+ pictures across 20+ Exhibitions. Surprisingly during the 22 editions, only one photo has been stolen – mysteriously returned a year later to the same spot. I once had some photos exhibited outside in a northern UK city. By the end of the short run you could hardly see the print beneath graffiti. I'm relieved to be pulled aside from the press tour to give an interview with French Radio and baffled when the translator just repeats what I'm saying in English with a French accent.

'There's no better way to start the day than with children,' I said – possibly not the ideal opening line to a school group. Some are bouncy, lively and wide-eyed. Others surly and more self-conscious. The questions are surprisingly engaged; do you ask people permission to photograph them? Do you have another job alongside being a photographer? Do you use manual or automatic? Is the man lying on the grass in your photograph dead?

I visited Don's exhibition in an abandoned garage and sat with his 50+ pictures of wars and famines from around the world and his social documentary work in Britain. 'Shell-shocked US Marine, The Battle of Hue 1968'; 'Near Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin, 1961'; 'Snowy, Cambridge, early 1970s'; 'Early Morning, West Hartlepool 1963'; 'The Guvnors in their Sunday suits, Finsbury Park, London 1958'; Tormented, Homeless Irishman, Spitalfields, London 1969', they're all here. To the sound of chaffinches and the hum of an electricity cable I reflect on my photos exhibited across town: Patriotic Woman's Bottom, King Charles III Coronation 2023; Sunburnt Couple, Bournemouth 2020, Man with Carrot Motif on Tie, 2019.

Top: Some of Dench's large-scale photos of the British on display

Above: Dench presenting his exhibition to a school group

Opposite page, bottom left: Homeless Irishman, East End, London, UK, 1969

Approaching the official festival opening at Artemisia cultural and congress centre, amongst the British Embassy staff and local politicians, I spot The Don. We head inside and sit patiently throughout lengthy speeches I find hard to follow, even through a translating device. At one point I'm sure the speaker is referencing Irish poet Oscar Wilde walking a lobster on a lead. Perhaps it was the same translator I had for the French radio interview.

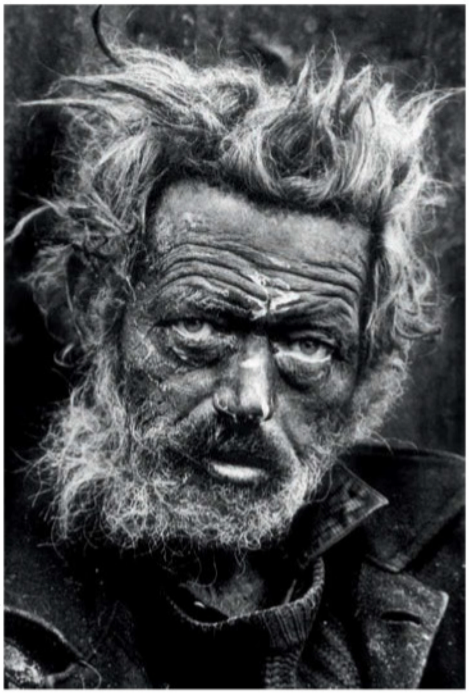
Don's wife, the journalist Catherine Fairweather, advised me not to bring Don one of my photo books. Not because he was abhorred by my work – he'd actually pointed out one of my images as his favourite in the festival brochure – but because he didn't like to have to carry them home. She revealed he's also been known to slide the odd accolade overboard. If you're ever diving in the Arabian Sea you may discover a Don McCullin achievement award. To be fair, he has a few.

Shenanigans

Don has so many people wanting to meet him, coming from all directions, it helps if he can contextualise you quickly. To Don I'm the guy who lives near where he grew up in Finsbury Park. Each time we meet at the festival he tells another tale of his boyhood shenanigans more delicious than the last – scrapes, brawls and sore faces, bringing back jackdaws and grass snakes from the countryside, ransacking bombed-out houses, friends cutting a shop window with a diamond to loot suits.

Jacques Rocher, the practically dressed, perpetually twinkling festival founder (and wealthy mayor-cum-environmentalist), is ever-present – posing for photos, handing out macaroons, and planting trees with

ALL THREE PICTURES ON THE LEFT AND ABOVE © MARTIN PARR/MAGNUM PHOTOS



© DON MCCULLIN/CONTACT PRESS IMAGES

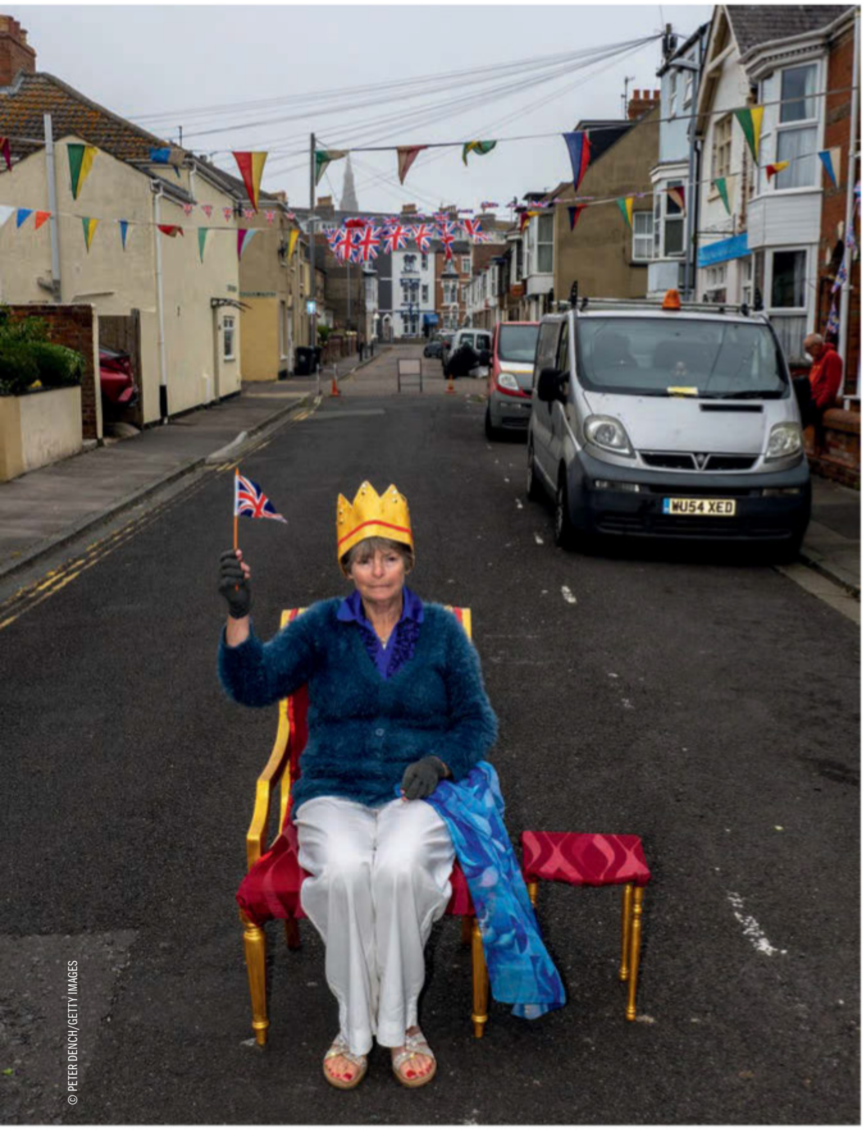
© DON MCCULLIN/CONTACT PRESS IMAGES

Above, from top: GB. England. London. The Lord Mayor's Year. The Drapers Livery's 650th Anniversary. The Queen visiting the Draper's Livery Hall. 2014

GB. England. New Brighton. A couple in a cafe. 1985

GB. England. New Brighton. From 'The Last Resort'. 1983-85

Left: American soldiers, Friedrichstrasse near Checkpoint Charlie, at the time of the construction of the Berlin Wall, West Berlin, Germany, August 1961



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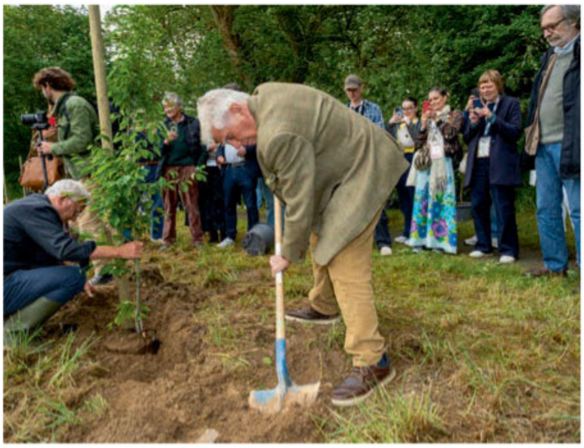


© PETER DENCH

Above: Each photographer invited to La Gacilly plants a tree. Don puts his back into digging a hole for his

Left: Queen of the street Lorraine Churchill at a street party to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on June 05, 2022 in Weymouth, England

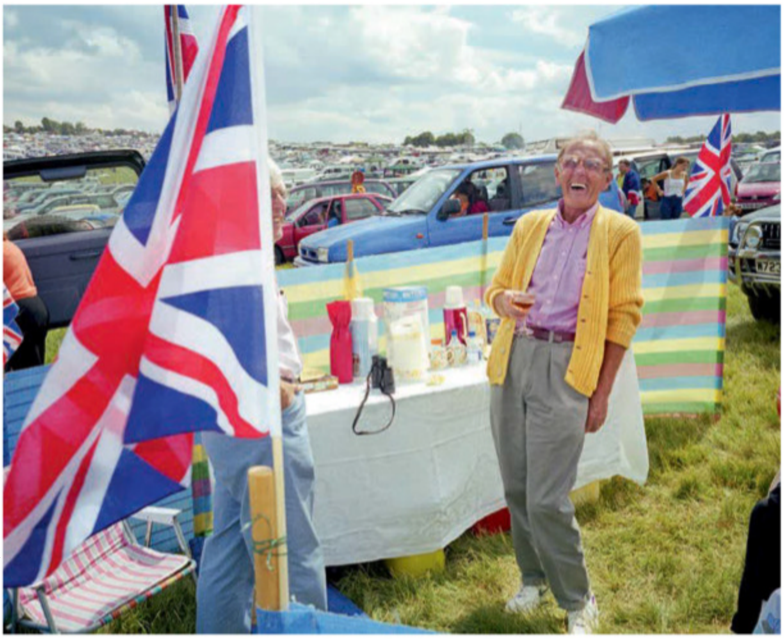
Below left: Picnic in the car park on Derby Day at Epsom Downs Racecourse. June 2001

Below right: A lady takes lunch during Whitby Goth Festival on April 13, 2019, Whitby, England

photographers. Each exhibitor gets to plant a tree and Don throws his back into shovelling dirt. I selected an alder (Alnus glutinosa) swamp-dweller, water-lover – the wood doesn't rot when waterlogged, instead turning stronger and harder – and deploy a gardener to do the grunt work. My tree plaque is curiously inscribed – shame on him who thinks evil of it.

At an hour-long book and catalogue signing session, I get so much black marker pen over me I'm terrified I've given myself a German dictator's moustache. I sit alongside Don on a panel discussion on 'UK, Photography Free and Unvarnished,' and give a plein air presentation to around 65 members of the public.

During my time hanging with Don, now 89, it often gets Darko – his demons never far away. He's acutely aware of his mortality and questions his choices, achievements and value of a 70-year career. He feels over-celebrated and bristles at compliments. Karma is pummelling him with a lifetime of guilts and ghosts. 'I'm at the end of my life, not only life, almost, but



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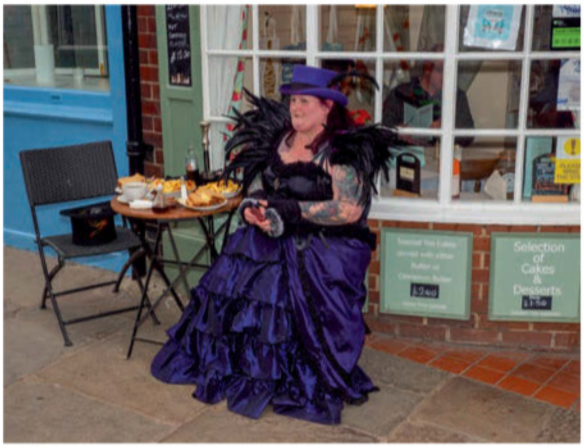

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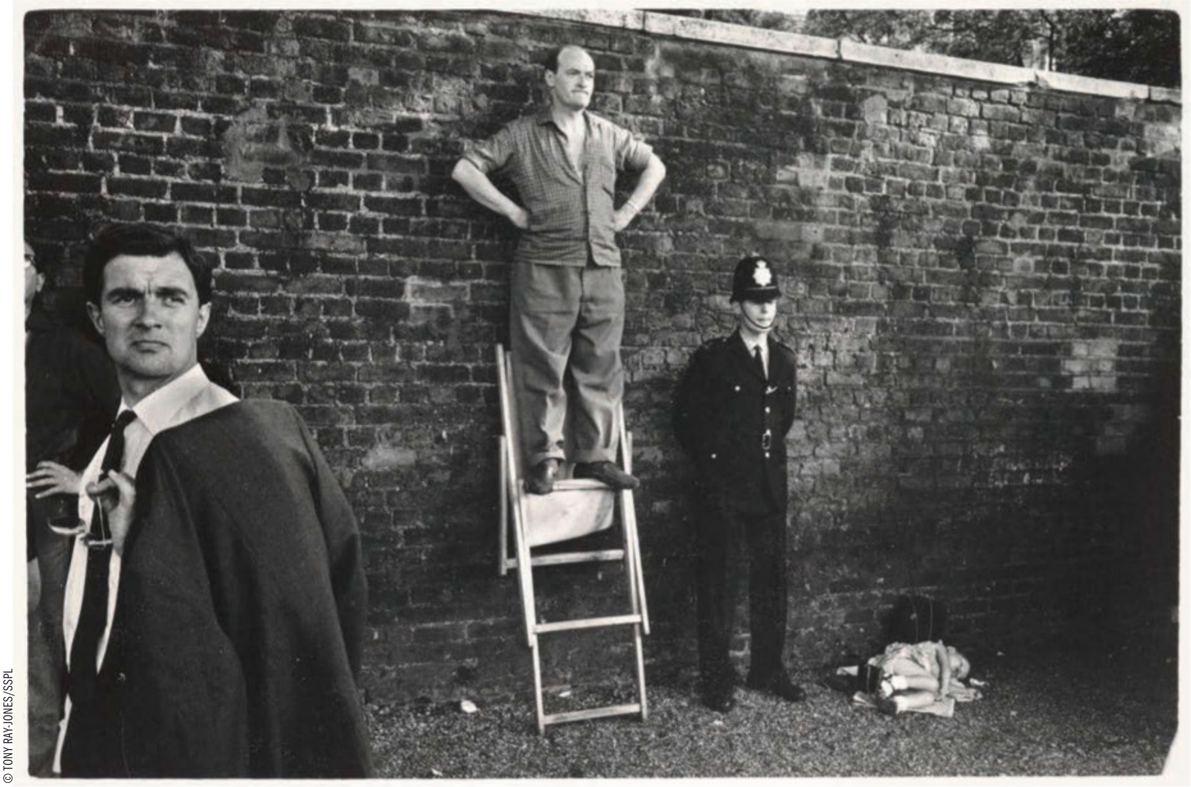

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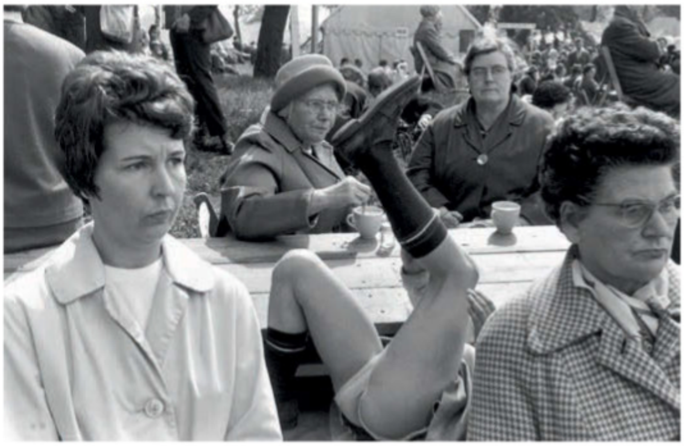
Left: Trooping the Colour, London, United Kingdom 1961

Below left: Chelsea Flower show, London, United Kingdom, 1967

Below right: English pop star and pianist Elton John travels in his private Boeing 720 plane 'The Starship', complete with piano bar during his 1974 US tour. Published in *The Daily Mirror* on October 16, 1974



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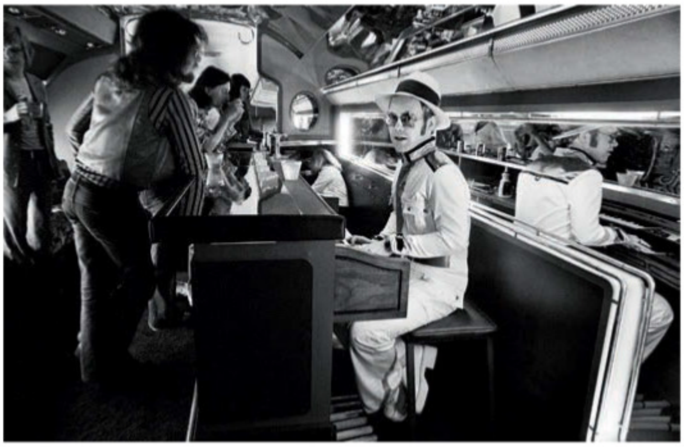

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by my time in photography. I've had a wonderful life behind it all. I feel as if I didn't deserve it, really, because I'm still alive,' he says.

Twenty-five years ago he embarked on a journey to create a cultural and architectural survey of the remains of the Roman Empire. The photographs published in his book, *The Roman Conceit* (GOST Books) focus on the marble sculptures of the heroes of antiquity preserved in museums in Denmark, Germany, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Turkey, the UK and the USA. Perhaps the book is an attempt at mental restoration.

In the book's introduction he says, 'It is never as an academic, nor as a scholar, that I respond to these stone gods and goddesses, but as a respectful admirer. I hope to pay tribute, through my photography, to their iconic beauty, their marble perfection and their very existence, exhumed lovingly by archaeologists and brought to life after 2,000 years of burial. We must not allow ourselves to forget that such beauty came at a price; this, after all was stone quarried by enslaved people and the statuary itself became the spoils of war, looted across the centuries, from country to country, to this day.'

On the final morning I interrupt Don being interviewed by *Polka* magazine to say goodbye and shake his hand cheerio. I'm dressed as a 1982 football Casual, Don more country Squire. 'You need a new camera bag, it looks older than me,' he says before turning back, and with that I turn towards the exit.

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Festival Photo La Gacilly runs until 5 October 2025.

I went to the festival channeling Mr Bean to a soundtrack of Benny Hill and returned more in tune with the classics. It's taken the French to bring me closer to understanding my place in photography. They say never meet your heroes. I say meet them, photograph them, exhibit alongside them, and carry their macaroons. They're heroes for a reason.

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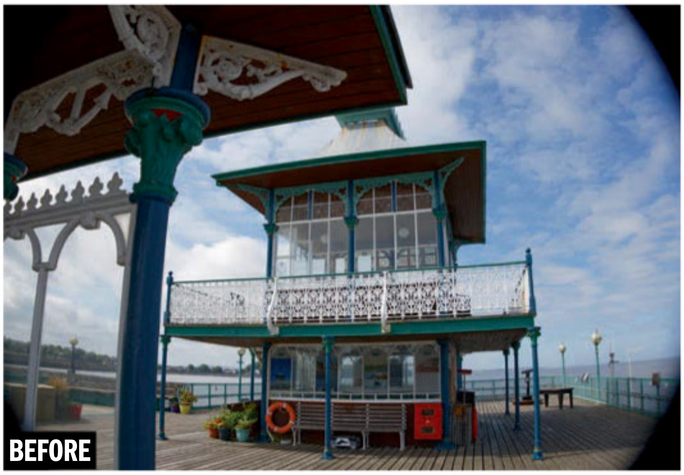
Clean up your (raw) act

However good your camera and lens, raw files usually benefit from some processing and tweaking. **Rod Lawton** shares some essential enhancements



Many modern mirrorless lenses depend on digital corrections. This is an uncorrected photo, shot with the Canon RF 24-50mm F4.5-6.3 IS STM. The barrel distortion and vignetting is obvious

Raw files don't come ready to use, straight from the camera. First, they have to be processed using a raw converter, which might be Adobe Camera Raw if you're using Photoshop, or built into cataloguing and editing tools like Adobe Lightroom and Capture One, but there are some enhancements and adjustments you need to check while you're doing it.

Camera makers build in all sorts of corrections and optimisations into the camera for processing JPEG images internally. These include important lens corrections which cannot necessarily be baked into the camera's raw files. Instead, these corrections have to be carried out later in software, and if they're overlooked your raw files may show distortion, colour fringing and other aberrations which you don't get with the in-camera JPEGs.

So if you do work exclusively with raw files it's vital to understand what these corrections are and how to apply them.

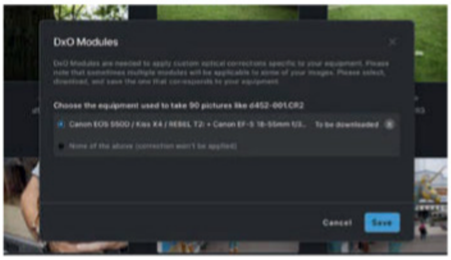
It's also important to understand how noise and noise-reduction is handled by in-camera JPEGs and raw files. With JPEGs, the camera maker will apply its own carefully calibrated noise reduction which may well be more effective than the default noise reduction applied to raw files in Adobe Camera Raw and Lightroom, for example.

However, with the arrival of AI noise reduction for raw files with DxO's DeepPRIME process, Adobe Enhance and Topaz Photo AI, some raw processors can achieve dramatic improvements in high ISO noise reduction and detail recovery. The ideal solution is software that can apply both lens corrections and AI noise reduction (where needed) to your raw files as they are processed.

We're using DxO PureRAW as an example of how to optimise or 'pre-process' your raw files and get them properly cleaned up for editing or sharing. You can achieve many of the same things in Adobe Camera Raw and Lightroom, and in some other applications too, but DxO's approach is different both in its results and the way it can integrate with your workflow.

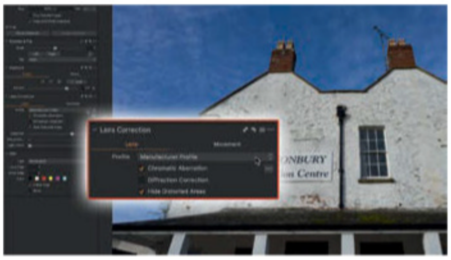
We're also not going to cover other raw adjustments like white balance or shadow and highlight recovery since these are optional and come later. The main thing is to make sure your raw files are properly corrected and cleaned up from the start.

ESSENTIAL RAW FILE CORRECTIONS



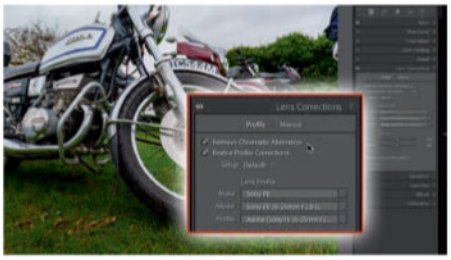
1 Lens correction profiles

DxO produces bespoke lens correction profiles using real lens samples in its own laboratories. When you view a raw file it will automatically identify and apply the matching lens profile, or offer to download it. Other programs like Lightroom and Capture One will do the same, matching up the photo to a lens profile automatically – it's always worth checking that a profile has been applied.



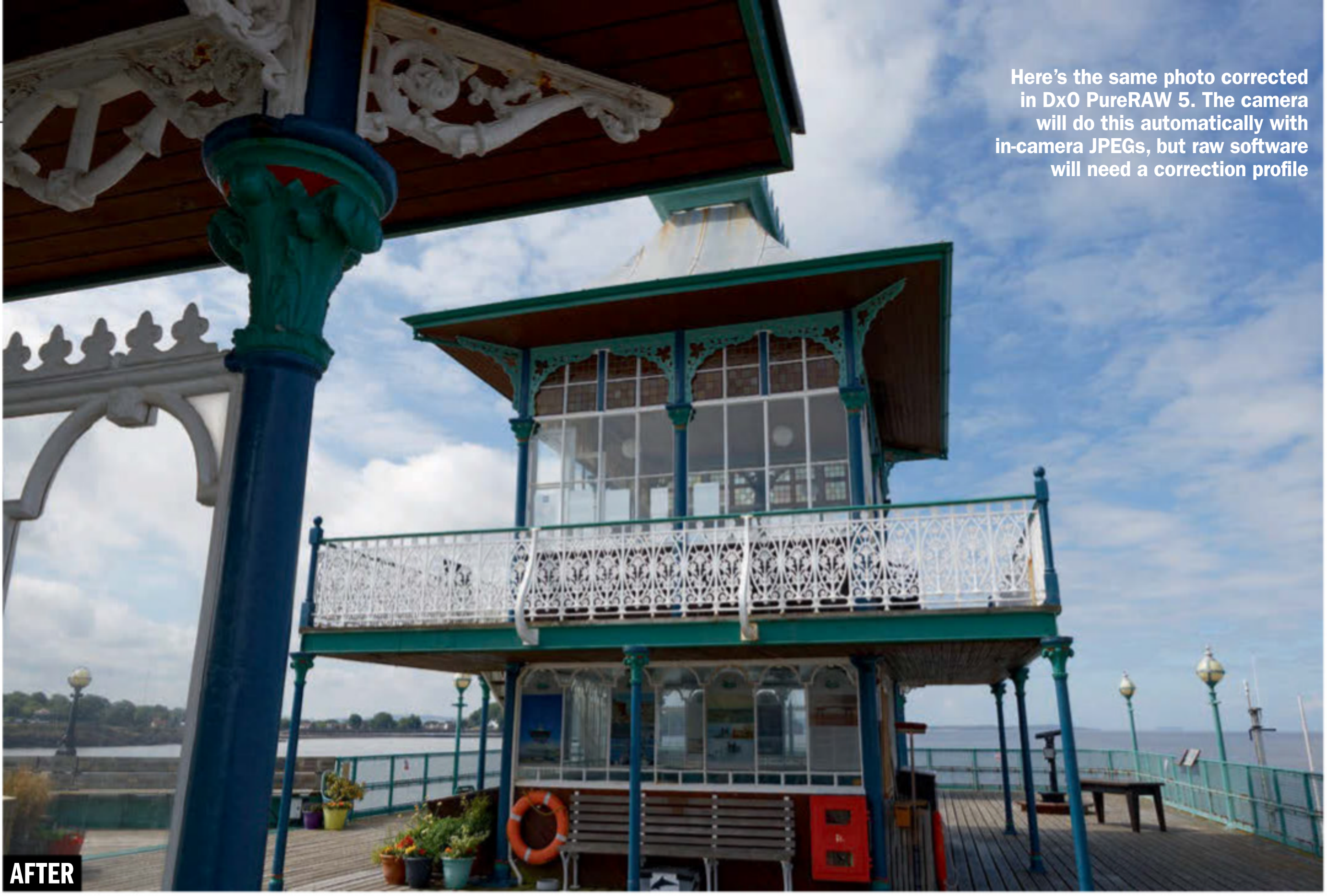
2 'Manufacturer profiles'

DxO PureRAW will always use its own profiles, but in other programs you may sometimes see the 'Manufacturer Profile' used instead. Some makers, such as OM System and Fujifilm, for example, will embed their own correction profiles; so this is a good fallback if the software does not have its own profile, though the optimisations may be less sophisticated.

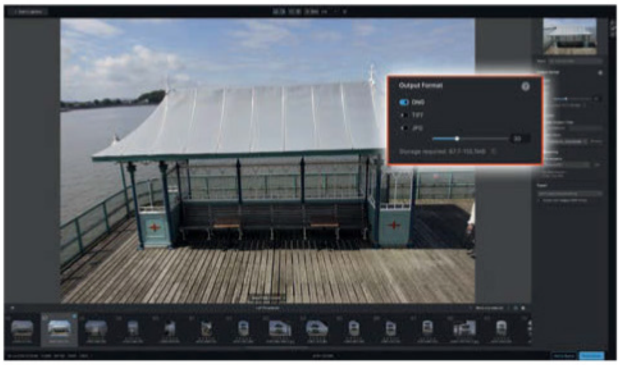


3 Colour fringing correction

DxO treats chromatic aberration correction (colour fringing) as part of its lens correction profiles, but other programs, notably Lightroom, Adobe Camera Raw and Capture One, treat it as a separate process, activated with a checkbox. If you're using one of these programs, don't forget that step. Many modern lenses exhibit quite strong colour fringing if it's left uncorrected.

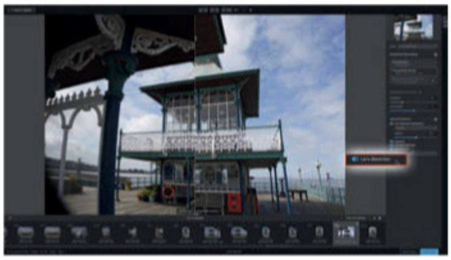


Here's the same photo corrected in DxO PureRAW 5. The camera will do this automatically with in-camera JPEGs, but raw software will need a correction profile



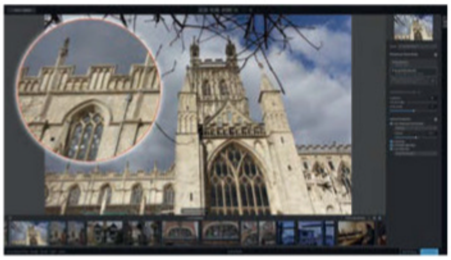
What makes DxO PureRAW different

Usually, when you work with raw files you're dependent on your software's own raw conversion, lens correction and denoising processes. Often these are quite good, but results can vary and some are better than others. DxO's raw processing, lens corrections and AI denoising processes are amongst the best you can get, but you might think that's not much help if you want to work on your raw files using your software's own tools. This is where PureRAW is especially clever. It can output 'Linear DNG' files which incorporate DxO's bespoke lens corrections and raw processing, together with its DeepPRIME AI noise reduction too, if required. These Linear DNGs behave just like regular raw files in other programs, offering all the extended colour information, white balance control and extended shadow and highlight detail of raw files, but already 'corrected' with DxO's custom profiles.



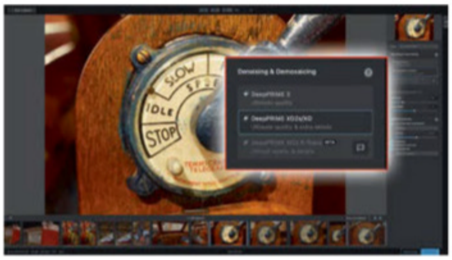
4 Distortion

Wideangle lenses typically show strong barrel distortion, while telephotos often have pin-cushion distortion. Both need to be corrected to make straight lines in your photos look straight. It's not as simple as using a generic distortion slider because many lenses have quite complex 'whisker' or 'moustache' distortion. With this Canon RF 24-50mm lens, for example, correction is essential.



5 Edge softness correction

This is one of the key advantages of DxO's lens corrections – they include compensation for the softening effect seen in many lenses towards the edges of the frame. In essence, it's a sharpening process applied progressively towards the edge of the image based on each lens's measured performance characteristics. This can make even mediocre lenses look good.



6 AI noise reduction

The best time to carry out noise reduction is right when the raw data in the image is being 'demosaiced' – this is the point where the red, green and blue data captured by the sensor is converted into full colour. Denoising a raw file with AI is normally a one-way process that leaves you with an image that's no longer 'raw', but PureRAW's Linear DNG format gets around this.

How should you save your processed raw files?

What is your editing workflow? Here's how the process of cleaning up your raw files can fit in

The traditional way to handle raw files was to use a one-way processing tool like Adobe Camera Raw, or Affinity Photo's 'Develop' Persona. You open the raw file, carry out all your adjustments and optimisations, and then it's processed into a regular JPEG or TIFF file for editing or sharing.

The point is that you can't go back and change your raw processing adjustments without starting all over again and creating a new processed image file. It's not difficult but it's not terribly convenient either.

Non-destructive

What programs such as Lightroom and Capture One do is different. All of your adjustments are applied non-destructively, and this applies both to raw files and to JPEG images. They treat them both the same. You can go back at any time to change your raw processing settings. Once you've tried this way of working, it's hard to go back.

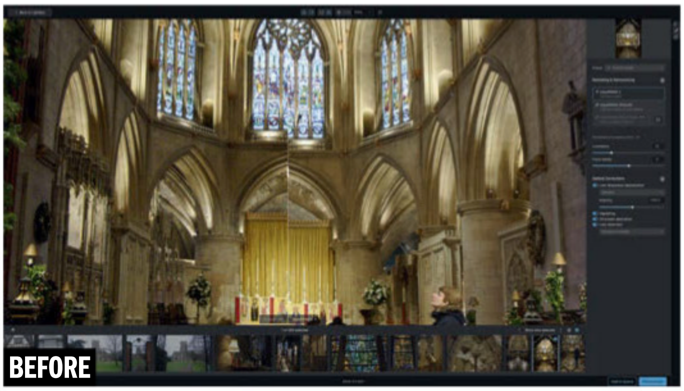
That's fine, but what if you want to use the more specialised and more powerful corrections in DxO PureRAW? Wouldn't it be great if you could get the best of both worlds – DxO's corrections applied but still with all the flexibility of a raw file?

This is what PureRAW's 'Linear DNG' format achieves. You can process a regular raw file in PureRAW and output a fully corrected Linear DNG file for use in any other program that works with raw files. It's like having a fully-corrected, 'cleaned up' raw file. The only downside is that these Linear DNG files can be two to four times the size of a regular raw file, so it's something to take into account if you intend to use this process routinely.

DxO's use of the Linear DNG format is not unique. Adobe uses the same format for its 'Enhanced' raw files, which also use AI noise reduction and detail enhancement.

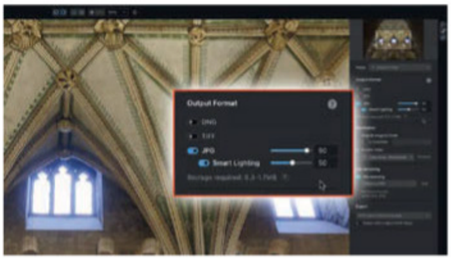
The image format you choose for exporting images from PureRAW will depend on your own personal workflow. DxO PureRAW can export Linear DNG files, TIFF files or JPEGs, depending on what you need.

See our walkthrough for a breakdown.



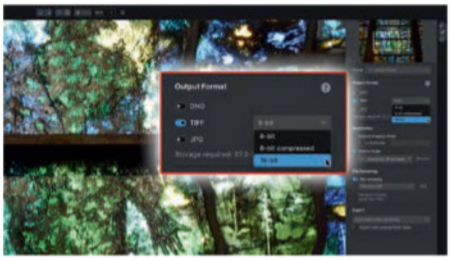
DxO PureRAW can do a great job of cleaning up your raw files, fixing distortion, edge softness, noise and more – but how do you build this into your editing workflow?

DXO PURERAW EXPORT OPTIONS



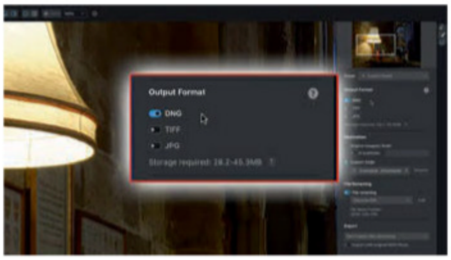
1 When to use JPEGs

JPEGs are ideal if your raw files don't really need any more work but you just want to fix any distortion, colour fringing, edge softness and noise. Note that PureRAW also has a 'Smart Lighting' option for JPEG images that balances up the shadows and highlights to maximise the dynamic range. It may be all you need if you just want some cleaned-up JPEG versions of your raw files.



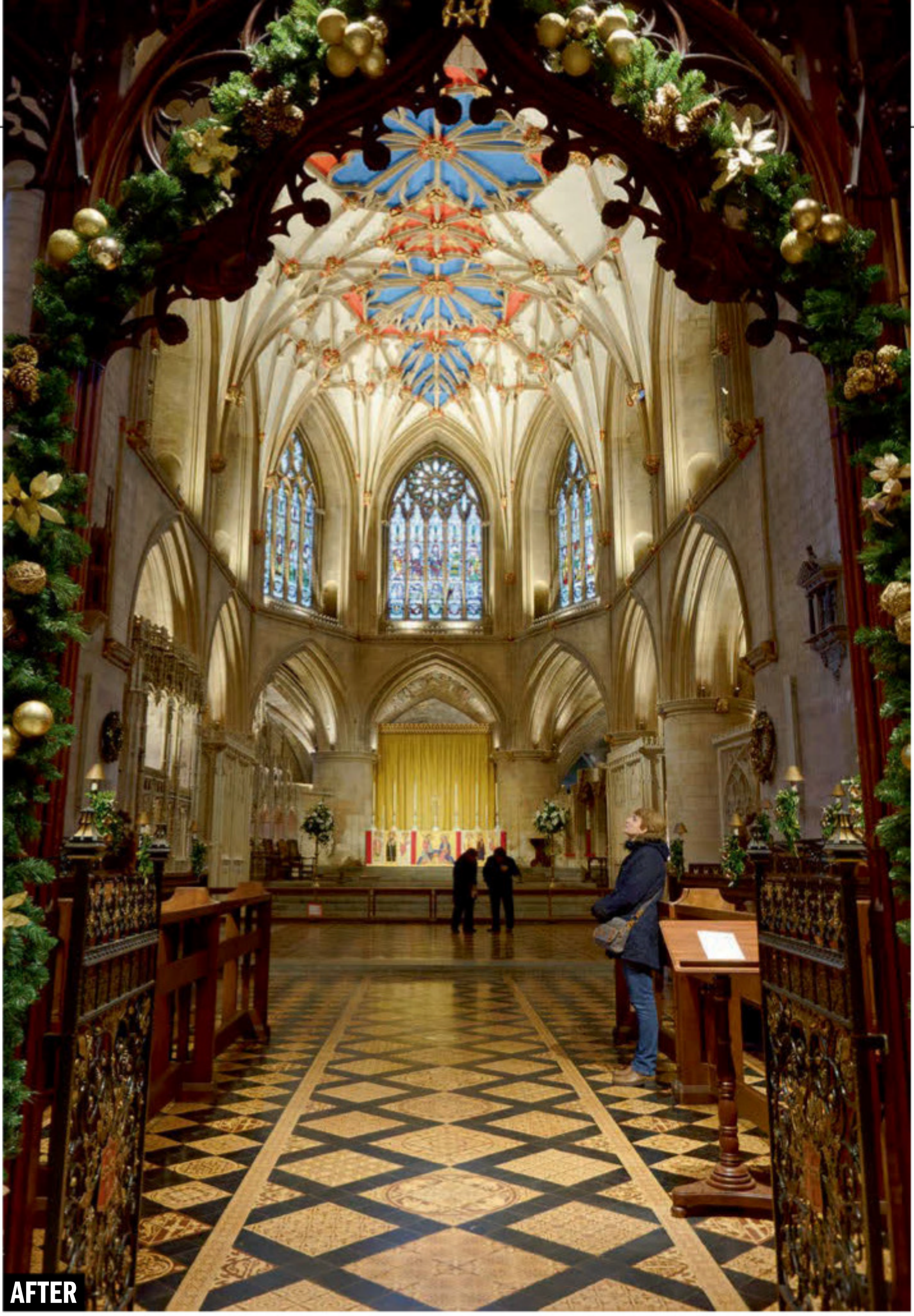
2 When to use TIFF

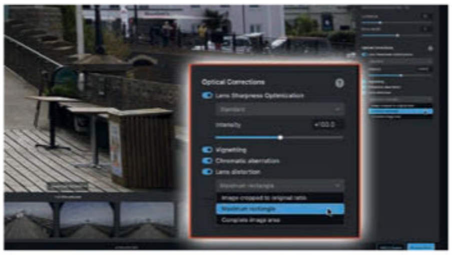
The TIFF format is a 'processed' image file format like JPEG, but it uses non-destructive compression, so you do get much larger file sizes than JPEGs. If you use the 16-bit TIFF option, the file sizes are larger still, but you'll end up with a file that will respond much better to strong editing adjustments than a JPEG. TIFFs are ideal for editing if you don't plan any further raw adjustments.



3 When to use DNG format

PureRAW's DNG files are two to four times larger than the original raw files, but, you now have a 'raw' file that's fully corrected for distortion, colour fringing, vignetting, edge softness and noise, and still has all the editing flexibility of the raw format. It's the best of both worlds. It's ideal if you still want to work with raw files, but you want DxO's powerful corrections applied first.

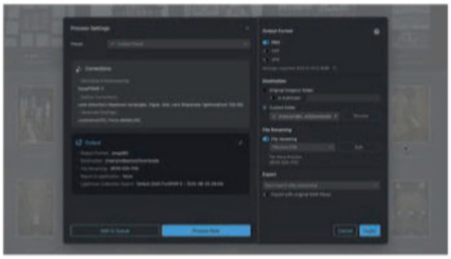



Optical Corrections
Lens Sharpness Optimization
Standard
Intensity
+100.0
Vignetting
Chromatic aberration
Lens distortion
Maximum rectangle
Image cropped to original ratio
Maximum rectangle
Complete image area

What is PureRAW's 'Maximum Rectangle' option?

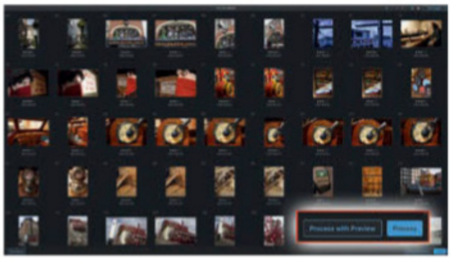
DxO's edge softness correction is not the only clever feature offered by its lens correction profiles. It can also exploit a side-effect of barrel distortion correction to produce wideangle images that appear even wider than those the camera captured. It sounds impossible, but the explanation is quite simple. When software corrects barrel distortion it pushes the edges and the corners of the image outwards, creating an image area that's actually a little larger than the original crop. In Lightroom you don't see this – those extra image regions are discarded. But if you check PureRAW's drop-down crop menu in the Correction Settings panel, you'll see a 'Maximum Rectangle' option which increases the image crop area to include the extra areas produced by the distortion correction. Your wideangle shots are now even wider!

Left: With DxO's Linear DNG format you can export a fully-corrected image that still has all the editing flexibility of a raw file in other programs



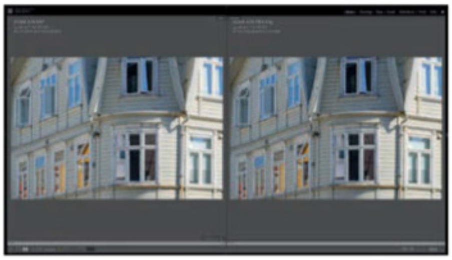
4 Destination and file naming

PureRAW is effectively a batch processing tool which creates a whole new set of image files from your original raw files. This applies even if you are exporting DNG files. So you'll need to think about where you want to save them – a subfolder of the existing image folder may be the easiest option – and whether you want to set up a custom file naming system.


Process with Preview
Process

5 Process with Preview vs Process

The first few times you use PureRAW you'll want the Process with Preview option so you can preview the effects of your settings via a before-and-after view; though with DeepPRIME processing applied, it may take a few seconds to update. Once you've settled on your favourite settings though, the Process option is faster, especially for queuing lots of images.



6 PureRAW in Lightroom

So far we've looked at PureRAW as a standalone batch processing tool, but if your main editing tool is Lightroom Classic, there's another route, via an export option that's added to Lightroom when you install PureRAW. This sends the original raw file to PureRAW and the corrected DNG file is returned automatically to your catalog – it even preserves any edits you've made in Lightroom.

At a glance

£2299 body only

£2999 with 24-105mm F4 lens

- 24MP full-frame sensor
- ISO 100-51,200 (standard)
- Up to 30fps shooting
- 6K 30p, 4K 60p, Full HD 120p video recording
- 5.76m-dot, 0.78x OLED viewfinder
- 3in, 1.84m-dot tilt/vari-angle LCD

Panasonic Lumix S1IIE

This 24MP camera promises the 'essentials', but is it just playing second-best to its higher-end S1II sibling? **Andy Westlake** finds out

For and against

- + Excellent build and handling
- + Highly refined control layout
- + Large, detailed viewfinder and versatile articulated LCD
- + Very effective in-body image stabilisation
- + Genuinely practical high-resolution multi-shot modes
- − No auto subject-detection mode
- − No intermediate burst speed between 10fps and 30fps

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Data file

Sensor	24.2MP BSI-CMOS, 35.6 x 23.8mm
Output size	6000 x 4000
Focal length mag	1.0x
Lens mount	L-mount
Shutter speeds	60-1/8000sec
Sensitivity	ISO 100-51,200 (standard), ISO 50-204,800 (extended)
Exposure modes	PASM, iAuto, 5x Custom
Metering	Multi, centre-weighted, spot, highlight
Exposure comp	+/-5EV in 0.3EV steps
Continuous shooting	30fps (electronic), 10fps (mechanical, AFS), 8fps (AFC)
Screen	3in, 1.84m-dot tilt/ vari-angle
Viewfinder	5.76m-dot, 0.78x OLED, 120fps
AF points	779
Video	6K 30p, 4K 60p, Full HD 120p
External mic	3.5mm stereo
Memory card	CFexpress Type B, UHS-II SD
Power	DMW-BLK22 rechargeable Li-ion
Battery life	380 (LCD), 340 (EVF)
Dimensions	134.3x102.3x91.8mm
Weight	795g including battery and SD card

Back in February, Panasonic launched the S1RII – a pro-spec full-frame mirrorless camera with a 44MP sensor. Less than three months later, it followed up with not just one, but two new 24MP models that share the same body design. The difference between them is that the S1II has a 'partially stacked' sensor that enables high-speed shooting, while the S1IIE (E for 'essentials') uses a more conventional BSI-CMOS sensor.

At £2,299 body-only, the S1IIE is about 80% of the S1II's price. However, the differences between the two aren't necessarily huge. For stills, the S1II can shoot at an impressive 70 frames per second using its electronic shutter, whereas the S1IIE can 'only' manage 30fps. For video, the S1II again offers faster frame rates at many resolutions, along with higher specified dynamic range. But elsewhere, the two cameras are near-identical.

At this price point, the S1IIE finds itself up against the likes of the Nikon Z6III, Canon EOS R6 Mark II, and Sony Alpha A7 IV. A comparison with the Nikon Z6III is particularly interesting, as it uses a 24MP partially-stacked CMOS sensor like the S1II, but at about the same price as the S1IIE. The Z6III boasts a more sophisticated subject-recognition autofocus system, but not quite as high-end a body-design. So does the S1IIE's balance of features make sense?

Features

Panasonic says that the S1IIE employs a 24MP full-frame BSI-CMOS sensor that's similar to the one in the older S5II and

Low-ISO image quality is excellent, and a match for any other 24MP full-frame camera
Panasonic S1IIE, 24-60mm F2.8 at 48mm, 1/160sec at f/11, ISO 100

S5IIX. It provides a sensitivity range of ISO 100-51,200 as standard, which can be extended to ISO 50-204,800. That's pretty much standard for this type of camera. Like the firm's other full-frame models, it uses the L-mount that was originally designed by Leica, and which is also shared with Sigma.

As previously stated, the S1IIE can shoot at 30fps in raw using its electronic shutter. Switch to the mechanical shutter, and this drops to 10fps with focus fixed, or 8fps with continuous AF. Engage Image Priority mode, which records 14-bit rather than 12-bit raw, and you get 7fps with AFS or 6fps with AFC.

For autofocus, there are subject detection options for humans, animals (including birds), cars, motorbikes/bicycles, trains and airplanes. Unfortunately, though, there's no Auto-selection option. When photographing people, there's a new mode specifically for 'Urban Sports', such as breakdancing, parkour and skateboarding. Face and eye detection and tracking are also said to be improved, which is probably more useful.

You get the same in-body image stabilisation as the S1RII, which promises up to 8 stops of shake reduction for hand-held shooting. Panasonic has also included both hand-held and tripod-based high-resolution multi-shot modes. These are available from the drive mode dial and create a 96MP composite raw file in-camera. There's a choice between 48MP or 96MP JPEG output resolutions.

The S1II and S1IIE become the first Lumix models to support HEIF format as an alternative to JPEG for still images. Here there's a choice of shooting in standard dynamic range (SDR) mode, or high dynamic range (HDR) using Hybrid Log Gamma. In principle, this allows extended highlight detail to be recorded and then displayed on compatible screens. However, HEIF support is still very limited compared to JPEG.

Built-in Wi-Fi and Bluetooth provide smartphone connectivity via the Lumix LAB app. Here you can copy photos and videos to your smartphone for editing and sharing. There's both a basic Bluetooth shutter release and a comprehensive remote control via Wi-Fi. You can also download LUTs and copy them to the camera for colour-grading your output, either video or stills.

For video, the S5IIE can record in 6K at 30fps in 17:9, 16:9, or 3:2 'open gate' formats, with the latter enabling cropping to various aspect ratios in post-processing. 4K recording is limited to 30p uncropped, but 60p is available with a 1.5x crop. Full HD 120p is also on offer. Panasonic has also added a 2.4:1 'Cinemascope' format, which allows 6K 60p and 4K 60p recording using the full sensor width. The camera can also record Apple ProRes RAW and ProRes RAW HQ internally to a CFexpress Type B card, at up to 5.8K 30p, or C4K 60p.

Build and handling

For the S1IIE and S1II, Panasonic has used exactly the same body design as the S1RII, with the three distinguishable only by their name badges. This is great for anyone who uses more than one of these models, as all the controls work in the same way.

Measuring 134.3x102.3x 91.8mm and weighing in at

At low ISO sensitivities, dynamic range is excellent
Panasonic S1IIE, 24-60mm F2.8 at 24mm, 1/500sec at f/8, ISO 100

795g including the battery and SD card, the S1IIE is broadly similar in size to the Canon EOS R6 Mark II, Nikon Z6III, and Sony Alpha A7 IV. It's the heaviest of the group, though, which reflects its chunky build. The viewfinder sticks a long way out of the back, due to the fan that's integrated into the front of its housing. This means it takes up a little extra space in a bag, but also makes it a bit more comfortable to use.

Thanks to a deep handgrip and a small but effective thumb hook, the camera feels very secure in your hand. Its magnesium alloy body is dust- and splash-resistant and freezeproof down to -10 °C, at least. The exterior is covered in buttons, dials and switches, giving direct access to all the most important camera settings.

Overall, you get the same excellent handing as previous Panasonic cameras. There are three electronic dials for changing exposure settings, plus an 8-way joystick on the back and a large drive mode dial on the top left. A row of buttons behind the shutter release provides quick access to white balance, ISO, and exposure compensation, while secondary functions are easily accessed via the Q button on the back. Pretty much the entire interface can be operated by the touchscreen, which complements the physical controls perfectly.

One welcome update over the S5II design is a new still/video/S&Q switch beneath the drive mode dial; previously, everything was on the exposure mode dial. Photo and video settings are now kept entirely separate, too, which is welcome for users who jump back and forth between them. The power switch has been redesigned so it's easier to flick with your right thumb, and both the exposure mode and drive dials gain locking buttons, so they don't get knocked by accident. A switch on the left shoulder allows you to lock any subset of the controls to prevent inadvertent settings changes.

On the back, the AF mode/area control is now further away from the viewfinder compared to the S5II, so it's easier to access. Meanwhile, the top rear dial has been repositioned leftwards. This means that all the controls operated by your right thumb are more tightly clustered, which makes the camera just that bit quicker to use.

A second video start/stop button is placed on the front, which is handy if you like to record yourself. Personally, though, I find it's far too easy to press by accident, so I disabled it in photo-shooting mode. You don't get the audio control button that's on the Micro Four Thirds GH7, but it's possible to map this to any function button.

No fewer than five custom positions on the mode dial allow you to store camera setups for different kinds of shooting. These can be given meaningful names, too, which are shown onscreen for a few seconds when you select a C mode, to help you remember what you've set them to do. However, you always have to keep in mind that the focus and drive modes are defined by their physical controls, and set these appropriately too.

Out-of-the-box, the S1IIE's control dials are oddly underused. Both the top dials do the same thing except in manual exposure mode, while the rear wheel sets the audio output volume (which is fine for video, but not for photography). Thankfully every single control is customisable, so I reconfigured the top thumbdial to change exposure compensation, and the wheel on the back to set ISO. Set like this, I found the camera a pleasure to shoot with.

Viewfinder and screen

One area where the S1IIE stands out within its class lies with its viewfinder and screen. Its 5.76m-dot, 0.78x magnification EVF provides an impressively large, clear view, which is matched for size and resolution among its peers only by the Nikon Z6III. Meanwhile the LCD has the most versatile articulation mechanism that you'll find at this price point.

Exposure, white balance and colour are all previewed by default, giving a good idea of how your shots should turn out. But in a change from how older Lumix models work, the preview image is displayed at the set aperture by default, which provides a live depth-of-field preview. The aperture opens up again when you half-press the shutter button.

All the expected compositional aids are available, including gridlines, a level display, a live histogram, and focus peaking. In video mode you also get such things as a vectorscope for judging white balance and colour, and a waveform display that shows the distribution of lighting levels across the frame. But you can't view these both at the same time, or use them for stills.

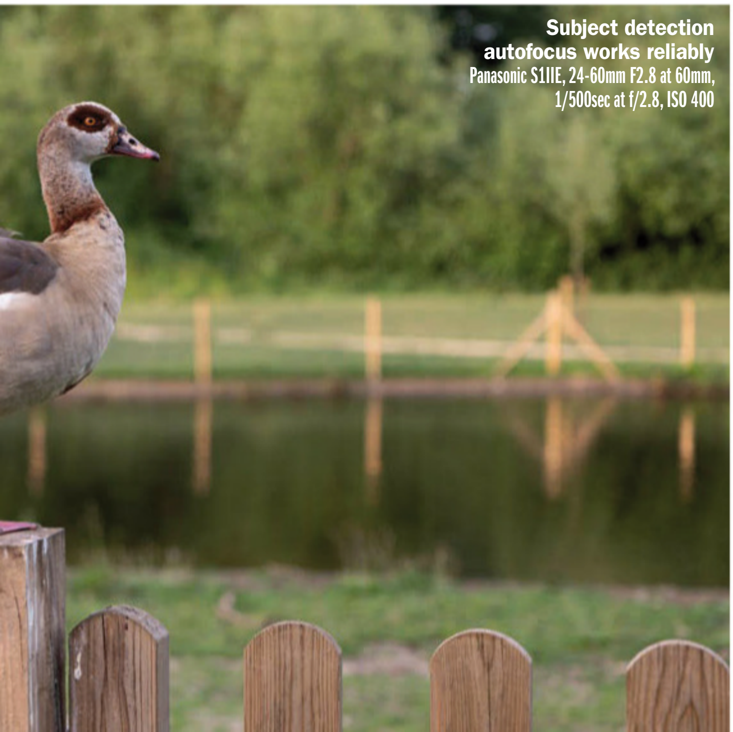
As for the screen, this can be both tilted up or down behind the camera, and swung out to one side and swivelled up, down or forwards. This allows the screen to be pointed at practically any angle you please. It's every bit as useful for photographers shooting at awkward angles in portrait format as it is for vloggers filming themselves. The fact that you can pull the screen away from the back means that it doesn't conflict with microphone or HDMI cables either. Unlike side-hinged screens, it also works perfectly well with L-brackets for vertical shooting on a tripod.

Autofocus

When the first-generation Lumix S1 appeared in 2019, autofocus was probably Panasonic's weakest point. But that turned around with the adoption of phase detection on the S5II at the start of 2023. The S1II series includes a pretty sophisticated subject detection system, too, which brings it much closer in line with its rivals. For anyone updating from an older Panasonic camera, it'll be a revelation.

Subject recognition includes settings for humans, animals (including birds), motorcycles, cars, trains, and airplanes. Eye detection is available for both humans and animals, and with vehicles you can tell the camera to focus on the most important part, which is usually the front. Unfortunately, though, there's no Auto mode that can detect the subject type, so you always have to specify in advance which of them you're going to be shooting.

Panasonic also does a good job of clustering the AF controls close together under the control of your right thumb. All the area and subject detection settings are accessible via a button in the middle of the focus mode selector switch, with the AF-ON button and joystick alongside. Once you've mastered how it all works, it's quick and easy to tailor the focus settings to suit different situations.



Subject detection autofocus works reliably
Panasonic S1IIE, 24-60mm F2.8 at 60mm, 1/500sec at f/2.8, ISO 400

Focal points

Physically, the S1IIE is identical to the 44MP S1RII and the S1II, but it uses a 24MP BSI-CMOS sensor

Power

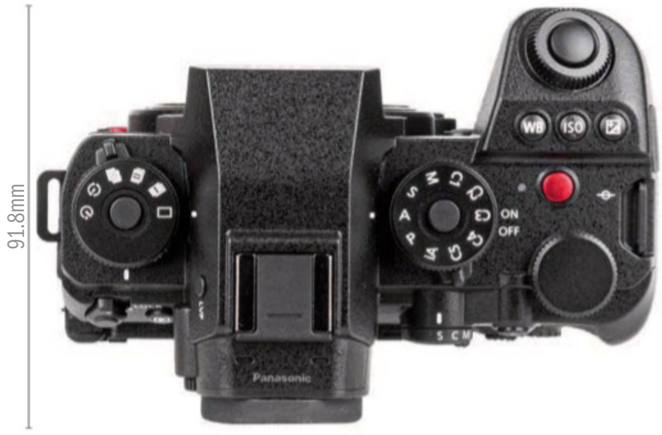
Panasonic's standard DMW-BLK22 battery is rated to deliver 380 shots using the LCD and 340 with the EVF, and charges in-camera via USB-C.

Storage

One card slot accepts CFexpress Type B media, while the other is for UHS-II SD. It's also possible to record directly to a USB-C SSD.

Connectors

On the left side you'll find microphone, headphone, USB-C and full-size HDMI ports. Panasonic's proprietary 2.5mm remote release connector is on the handgrip.



Fan

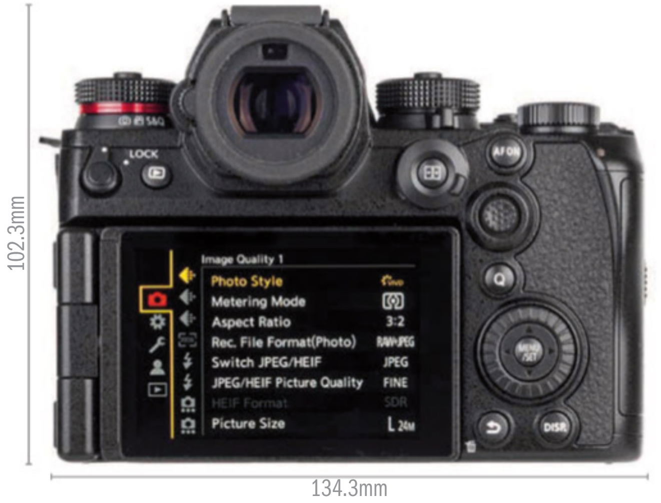
A cooling fan is built-in, with vents on either side of the viewfinder. Thanks to this active cooling, there's no hard limit to the video recording time.

Vertical grip

All three S1 models are compatible with the same BMW-BG2E battery grip, which boasts a replicate set of controls for vertical shooting and a hot-swappable battery. It costs £299.

Mode switch

A new switch beneath the drive dial selects between photo, video, and slow-and-quick shooting modes.



I only had the Lumix S 24-60mm F2.8 lens available while testing the camera, which somewhat limited my ability to push the autofocus system to its limits. But overall, I got much the same impression from the S1IIE as I did from the S1RII. With both humans and animals, the subject recognition can find and track focus on subjects reliably, even when they're small within the frame. When it identifies multiple possible options, you can select between them using the joystick.

It's worth bearing in mind, though, that one of the benefits of a partially-stacked sensor lies with snappier focus tracking (I certainly saw this with the Nikon Z6III). So if you're likely to be shooting erratically moving subjects, it's likely that the S1II will be a better choice than the S1IIE. Unfortunately, though, I wasn't able to test the two cameras side-by-side.

One oddity appears when you combine subject detection with tracking. If the camera can't find a subject of the specified type, then it won't fall back on its conventional tracking mode like the S5II does, but instead it simply gives up. For some users this will be infuriating; others won't notice or care. But it would be nice for Panasonic to fix this flaw with a firmware update across the entire S1II line.

You don't have to use subject detection, of course, and can use the conventional AF system instead. Here you get a wide range of focus area sizes and shapes which can be positioned freely within the frame. This performs very well indeed, giving accurate focus with minimal fuss.

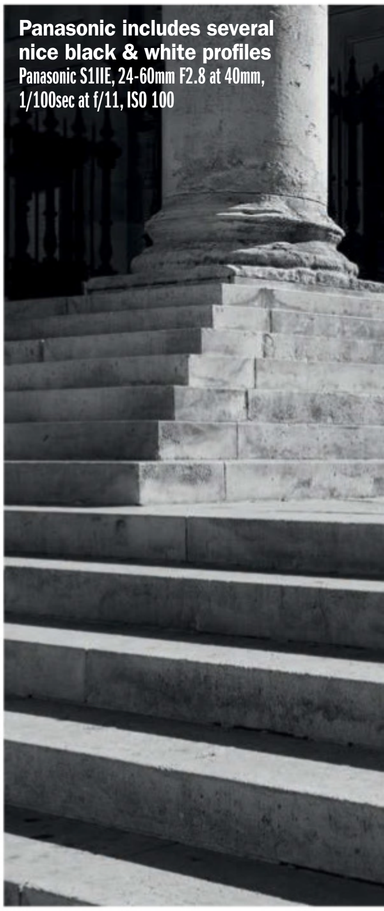
Performance

Overall, the S1IIE is every bit as responsive as you'd expect from a camera with professional aspirations. Panasonic appears to have cured the intermittent startup lag that I've seen with other recent Lumix models, so now it's always ready to shoot the moment you flick the power switch. The shutter sound is fairly unobtrusive, too, firing with a soft, low-pitched clack.

Battery life is absolutely fine, and clearly better than the S1RII, as indicated by the CIPA rating of 340 shots using the viewfinder (vs 280). As always, this rating is based on taking individual shots at a time; you'll get many more than this when shooting bursts, especially with the electronic shutter. You can also top up the battery in-camera during breaks in shooting, and unlike some cameras, the S1IIE doesn't demand a USB-C PD source for recharging. This means you can charge it using a small powerbank or low-powered charger plug if necessary.

On the subject of continuous shooting, in my testing the camera matched its advertised speeds of 30 frames per second using the electronic shutter, 10fps using the mechanical shutter with focus fixed, and 8fps with C-AF. In all cases, you get a buffer of at least 180 frames, which should be more than enough for most users. Slightly surprisingly, write times aren't dramatically faster when using a CFexpress card compared to UHS-II SD, so unless you're pushing the camera to its limits, you won't get much of a performance boost from CFexpress.

It's worth noting, though, that there are no intermediate burst rates between 30fps and 10fps, which would have been useful. Another quirk is that files shot in a 30fps burst get grouped together in playback, which means you can skip past an entire set with one button press, or delete them all at the same time. But those shot at slower speeds don't, so you have to browse through them all individually.


Panasonic includes several nice black & white profiles
Panasonic S1IIE, 24-60mm F2.8 at 40mm, 1/100sec at f/11, ISO 100

Panasonic's image stabilisation works really well for both stills and video shooting. Using the Lumix S 24-60mm F2.8 lens, I was able to get consistently sharp handheld shots at shutter speeds up to about a second. When recording video, you can get almost tripod-steady results handheld using the Boost mode. This is all very impressive, and at least a match for any other full-frame camera.

When it comes to metering, the S1IIE is generally very reliable. Like many cameras, though, it can sometimes be prone to clipping small areas of highlight detail in bright, high-contrast conditions, and then you'll want to dial in some exposure compensation. But it's usually easy enough to spot this in the viewfinder.

Auto white balance is generally biased towards giving neutral tones, but Panasonic offers both cool and warm alternatives if you prefer; I switched over to the latter. There's also an AI-AWB option available, but only for in-camera raw processing. I've found that this is well worth trying

The S1IIE plays nicely with vintage manual-focus lenses
Panasonic S1IIE, Tamron SP 90mm f/2.5 Macro, 1/160sec at f/2.5, ISO 800

when the camera hasn't got things quite right first time, as it often gives better results.

Likewise, Panasonic's Standard Photo Style is tuned to give technically accurate colours. Personally, though, I prefer my images to have a bit more punch out-of-camera, so usually switched to the Vivid mode for shooting in colour. If you like shooting in black & white, Panasonic includes no fewer than five profiles with different tonalities – the Leica Monochrome option is probably my favourite of these overall.

As for raw image quality, unsurprisingly that looks pretty much the same as the S5II and S5IIX – and indeed a whole host of other cameras that probably all use the same sensor. This means it's very much in line with what we'd expect for a current 24MP full-frame camera. At low ISOs, you get plenty of detail, along with almost limitless scope for manipulating tonality sliders to pull up darker areas of the image.

Images remain pretty much clear of noise at sensitivities up to ISO 1600, beyond which detail and colour progressively degrade. But you can still expect to be able to shoot at settings as high as ISO 25,600 at least, and still get usable results. Even higher settings might be okay in an emergency given the capabilities of AI noise reduction software such as DxO PureRaw and Adobe Denoise.

One area where the S1IIE stands apart from other 24MP full-frame cameras is in having a practical and usable high-resolution multi-shot mode. This is two distinctly different modes rolled into one, for hand-held and tripod-based shooting. It's engaged directly from the drive mode dial and generates composite files in-camera, rather than requiring you to load a set of raw files into a computer afterwards.

Hand-held mode uses a process called super-resolution, which blends together multiple 24MP frames to extract extra detail. This gives visibly increased detail that's a good match for the 48MP JPEG option. Tripod mode, meanwhile, uses the pixel-shift method, with the IBIS system precisely shifting the sensor between shots to sample the scene in higher detail. This can get close to the full 96MP resolution. Tripod modes generally struggle with elements that move between exposures, but Panasonic's processing does a pretty convincing job by filling in those areas with single-shot data.

As usual with Panasonic, my main irritation is that the hand-held and tripod modes share the same menu for shooting settings. But you'll almost certainly want to use different options for each. It would make much more sense for the two to be treated as different modes with separate settings.

Verdict

LUMIX
Amateur Photographer
Testbench
Recommended
★★★★½

LET'S make one thing clear from the start – the Panasonic Lumix S1IIE is a seriously accomplished camera. You get a robust pro-spec body, with an excellent control layout and handling, rounded off by a fine viewfinder and an extremely versatile screen. It provides impressive image stabilisation, plus Panasonic's usual huge range of video features. The image quality is a match for any other 24MP full-frame camera. Its autofocus may not quite be the best in its class, but I suspect it'll be plenty good enough for most users.

If you're an existing Panasonic user thinking of upgrading from an original S1 or S5, then this is a massive step forwards. Even if you have an S5II or S5IIX, the more robust and refined body is a real attraction. And if you're sure you don't need the faster shooting and video frame rates of the S1II, the saving you can make from buying the S1IIE instead will go a long way to paying for a nice lens.

If, however, you're an enthusiast with no particular brand allegiance, then the S1IIE faces some stiff competition. Both the Nikon Z6III and Canon EOS R6 Mark II are about the same price and have better, or at least easier-to-use, autofocus systems. But in return, the S1IIE has a more robust-feeling body and an exceptionally versatile screen, so everything depends on which features you'd rather spend your money on.

Overall, though, I can't help but think that the S1IIE's main problem lies with its 'second-best' positioning within the Lumix line. At this level, I suspect most people would rather get the S1II and not feel like they're missing out. But if you can leap this particular psychological hurdle, you'll find the S1IIE is a fine camera in its own right.

FEATURES	8/10
BUILD & HANDLING	9/10
METERING	8/10
AUTOFOCUS	8/10
AWB & COLOUR	8/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	9/10
IMAGE QUALITY	8/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	9/10

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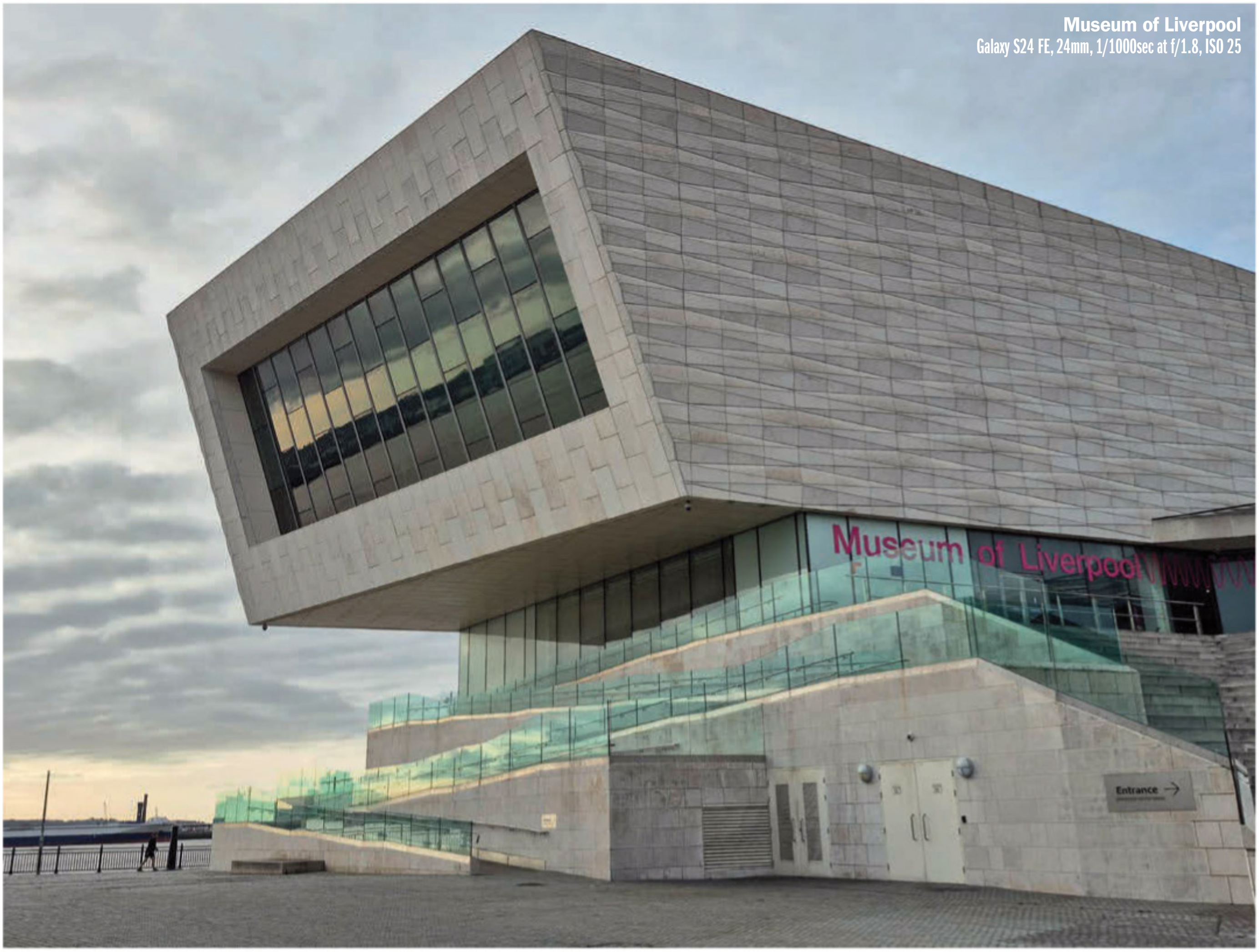


Museum of Liverpool
Galaxy S24 FE, 24mm, 1/1000sec at f/1.8, ISO 25

Samsung Galaxy S24 FE

This mid-priced phone is a 'Fan Edition' of the S24 series, and offers a cheaper option than the S24/S25, writes **Joshua Waller**

The Samsung Galaxy S24 FE is a more wallet-friendly phone in the Galaxy S series that offers many of the same features as the S24 phones, but at a cheaper price. So, what is missing, and how does Samsung make this phone cheaper?

Features

The Samsung Galaxy S series FE edition has always been an odd one, often being released a few months before the next new models come out, and often competing with other Samsung phones. But the FE model is often a cheaper option.

As a slightly cut-down version of the S24, the FE features a triple camera setup on the rear, but with a lower-resolution telephoto camera, with 8MP rather than 10MP. The selfie camera is 10MP on the S24 FE (without AF), compared to 12MP on the S24/S24+ with AF.

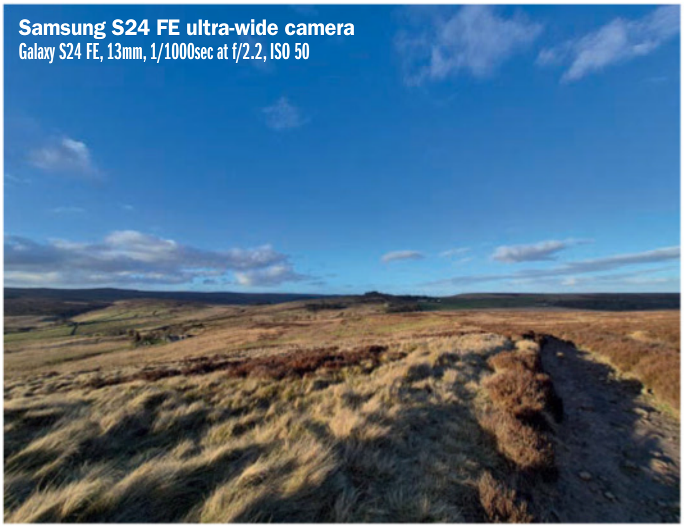
You also get Galaxy AI features from the flagship range of phones, and these include not only helpful phone features but also AI features in the photo editing area of the phone.

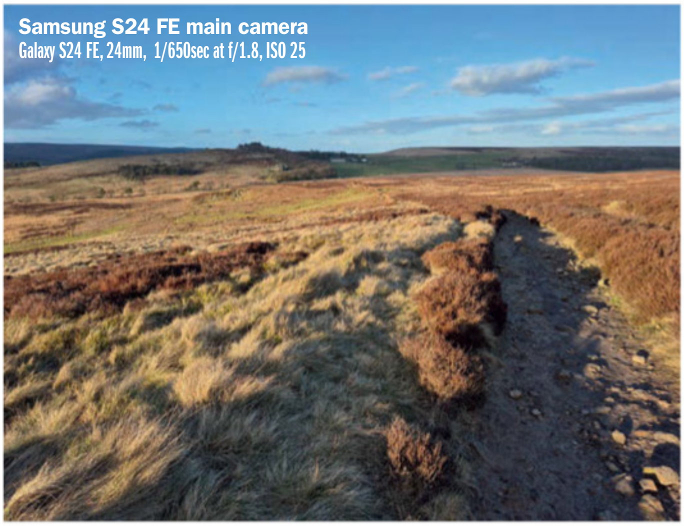
At a glance

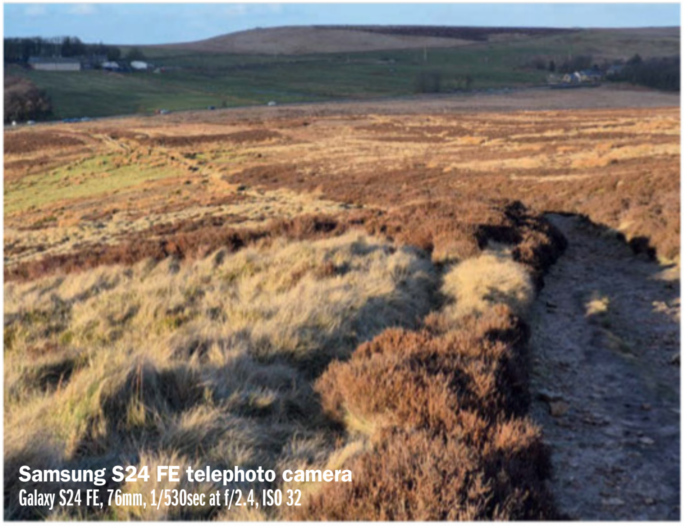
£649 (128GB storage)

- 50MP wideangle camera, 24mm equivalent f/1.8, PDAF, OIS
- 12MP ultra-wide camera, 13mm equivalent f/2.2, fixed focus
- 8MP telephoto camera, 76mm equivalent f/2.4, PDAF, OIS
- 10MP selfie camera, fixed focus
- 8K/4K video recording
- 6.7in FullHD+ AMOLED screen
- 4700mAh battery
- Android 14 (7 years of updates)
- 128GB, 256GB, or 512GB storage

S24 FE
SAMSUNG


Samsung S24 FE ultra-wide camera
Galaxy S24 FE, 13mm, 1/1000sec at f/2.2, ISO 50


Samsung S24 FE main camera
Galaxy S24 FE, 24mm, 1/650sec at f/1.8, ISO 25


Samsung S24 FE telephoto camera
Galaxy S24 FE, 76mm, 1/530sec at f/2.4, ISO 32

With a price of £649, the S24 FE is much more affordable compared to the S24/S25 models. You'll often find it on sale for less. However, if you can find the S24 on offer for a similar price, then it would be a better option as it has better specs. But if the S24 FE is cheaper where you are, carry on reading.

The phone has an aluminium frame, as well as Gorilla Glass Victus+ glass on the screen and on the back. The 6.7in screen has a peak brightness of 1900nits and a 120Hz refresh rate, as well as HDR10+. There's an IP68 rating meaning you can get the phone wet, or even take it underwater. But this isn't recommended as the charging port is still exposed.

There's a 4700mAh battery, with 25W wired charging and 15W wireless. This is a little on the slow side, with the other S-series phones offering faster wired charging. Even the new entry-level A56 has 45W wired charging. You can also find the phone with different storage options of 128GB, 256B and 512GB, with RAM at 8GB. The phone runs Android 14, and should get 7 years of updates.

Handling and design

The Samsung Galaxy S24 FE looks just like other S24 phones (excluding the Ultra), and also looks like the A55 series, which mirrors the design of other Galaxy phones. Ultimately all this means is that almost all Samsung phones look the same, which may or may not be a good thing, depending on how you feel about the design. However, the frame around the screen looks quite a bit larger than the frame around the S24/S24+ phones. But that's fairly common on entry-level and mid-range phones.

Samsung phones tend to offer the same user-friendly interface and quick access to controls, and the S24 FE is no exception. The screen benefits from a quick refresh rate, which can be set up to 120Hz. The peak brightness of 1900nits is reasonably good, although some competitors now offer double this.

Camera app

The night mode will automatically activate when the scene is dark enough, or you can select it manually from the mode screen. It lets you shoot with the 0.6x, 1x and 3x cameras, and exposures up to 8 seconds are possible.

The portrait mode gives you different zoom options of 1x, 2x, and 3x, and lets you adjust the strength of the background blur, as well as other lighting effects.

Pro Photo and Pro Video modes give you manual controls, and you can switch on raw image recording with this phone, without the need to install third-party photo-editing apps.

Performance

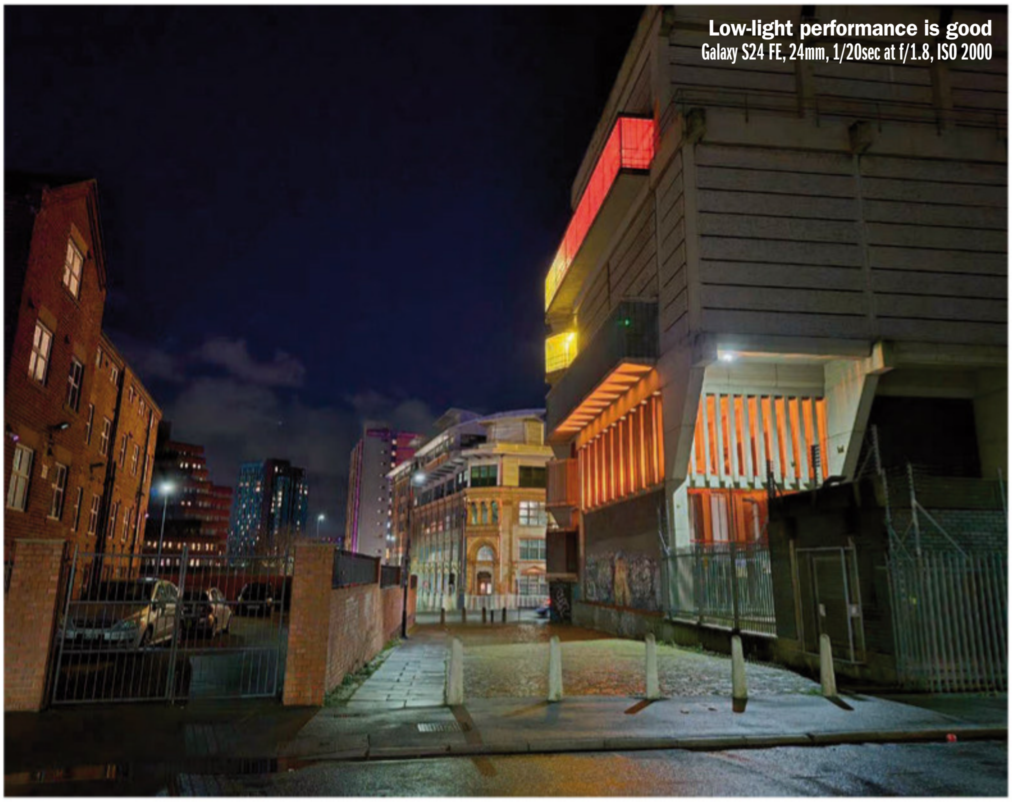
I've taken hundreds of photos with the S24 FE, in a variety of settings and weather conditions. Colour reproduction is generally pleasing, with bright colours and quite saturated images. They're definitely more saturated than most photos taken with Google Pixel phones, for example, and viewed in isolation, they look great. Whether you prefer what the Samsung produces or what Google phones produce will be down to taste. For most people higher saturation will likely be preferable, but there were times when I felt it was a bit too strong.

Exposure and dynamic range are generally very good. There's ittle need to adjust the exposure, and the phone does a good job dealing with bright and darker areas of the image, regardless of whether you're shooting in good light or low light. Images can look quite natural, without looking like an HDR art filter.

The 8MP 3.1x telephoto camera with its 76mm equivalent view gives a good amount of zoom, typical of a 3x telephoto camera on a smartphone. It's much more interesting than having just a 2x zoom (which could easily be done with the main camera). Optical image stabilisation (OIS) helps keep things steady, and the f/2.4 aperture is reasonable.

8MP may not seem like much, but the results are good enough for general use, especially if you're simply sharing your images online. Images are upscaled to 12MP so that they match the resolution of other images.

The selfie camera is a 10MP unit with an f/2.4 aperture, with support for 4K video recording. Focus is fixed, which is a shame, as the S24/S25 series normally offers autofocus on the selfie camera. However, focus is set so that it's optimised for subjects close to the camera, and detail is



Low-light performance is good
Galaxy S24 FE, 24mm, 1/20sec at f/1.8, ISO 2000

'The phone does a good job dealing with bright and darker areas of the image, in good light or low light'

crisp as a result, with softer backgrounds. In low light this camera can struggle, but shoot in good light and you'll be fine.

You can use the main camera for close-ups, and the results are relatively good. They're certainly better than the results from the 2MP or 5MP macro cameras on some phones, and there's a nice level of background blur.

Low-light performance is admirable, with the camera featuring a reasonably bright f/1.8 aperture and optical image stabilisation (OIS).

The phone offers 8K video recording, as well as 4K video at frame rates up to 120fps. This is impressive considering the price of the phone. Results are good, with image stabilisation doing a good job of providing smooth footage. 4K video is also available from the selfie camera at 60fps.

Selfie taken with the S24 FE
Galaxy S24 FE , 1/1100sec at f/2.4, ISO 50

Value for money

The Samsung Galaxy S24 FE sits in a slightly awkward position of being surrounded by similarly priced options. That includes Samsung's own S24 and S24 Plus models, which are better phones for not much more money, and the newer and cheaper Samsung Galaxy A56, which offers 45W charging, albeit with a lack of telephoto camera. If you can live without the telephoto camera, then the A56 is likely to feel like a real bargain. If you can stretch to the S24 Plus, then again, you're getting a better all-round phone. However if you find the S24 FE on offer, then it's amazing value, especially if you find it for under £500. Outside of Samsung there's a lot of competition from the likes of Google, Motorola, Nothing and others, with Motorola and Nothing both offering cheaper phones with telephoto cameras. AP

Verdict

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★

THE Samsung S24 FE feels like a mix of the A55 and S24, but landing nearer the S24 Plus, and when on sale, it's much cheaper. It only features 25W charging, which makes it feel like it's not a premium phone, with even the cheaper A56 offering 45W charging. This may seem minor, but when you run out of battery it can make a big difference. In some ways this phone may look more like a souped-up A55, rather than a cut-down S-series. However, the IP68 waterproof rating, 8K video recording, Samsung DeX, 7 years of updates, and telephoto camera definitely elevates it. Whether these features are enough for you will be down to your personal needs and preferences.

If you can find the S24/S24 Plus or S25/S25 Plus for a similar price, then they would definitely be the better choice. But if your budget is limited and you want a Samsung phone with a telephoto camera, and a range of more advanced features, then the S24 FE would be a great option, and especially if you can find it cheaper than the S24 Plus. Results from the cameras are good, and with bright saturated colours, it will please fans of Samsung phones.

For and against

- + Cheaper RRP than the S24
- + Larger screen than S24 (normal version)
- + IP68 rating (water/dustproof rating)
- − Telephoto and selfie cameras downgraded (compared to S24)
- − Selfie camera lacks AF
- − All Samsung phones from A35 to S24/S25 look the same

Colbor CineFlare CF5

Colbor's first fog machine is low-cost and easy to use, says **Damien Demolder**

● £119 ● www.colborlight.com

Colbor's CineFlare CF5 is a handheld device that gives plenty of control over the quality of the fog, smoke or mist it produces. While it can fill a room with a thick haze when needed, its size and accessories also lend themselves to the exact placement of precise little clouds on the still-life table. With a neat rotatable head, it can act as a smoke stick or be angled like a pistol.

Inside, we have a 12ml canister that we fill with the supplied plant-based food-grade glycerine to give 25 density choices. These can mimic a hazy mist, a thick fog, a smoky atmosphere or dry ice that sits low on the table. We can use the device with a range of nozzles, a flexible tube that allows us to place the smoke with some accuracy, and a sponge attachment that creates dense clouds that sit in one place.

We also get a five-speed fan attachment that will blow the fog into the air to disperse it more widely when needed. With an RGB ring light about the exhaust, we can also add colour for dramatic effect.

Usefully, Colbor includes a number of programmable options that allow us to produce long bursts of smoke. But we can also ask the CF5 to burp smoke at set intervals to keep the smoke levels topped up, and set the number of puffs it produces with each episode. It's remarkably sophisticated, should we want it to be.

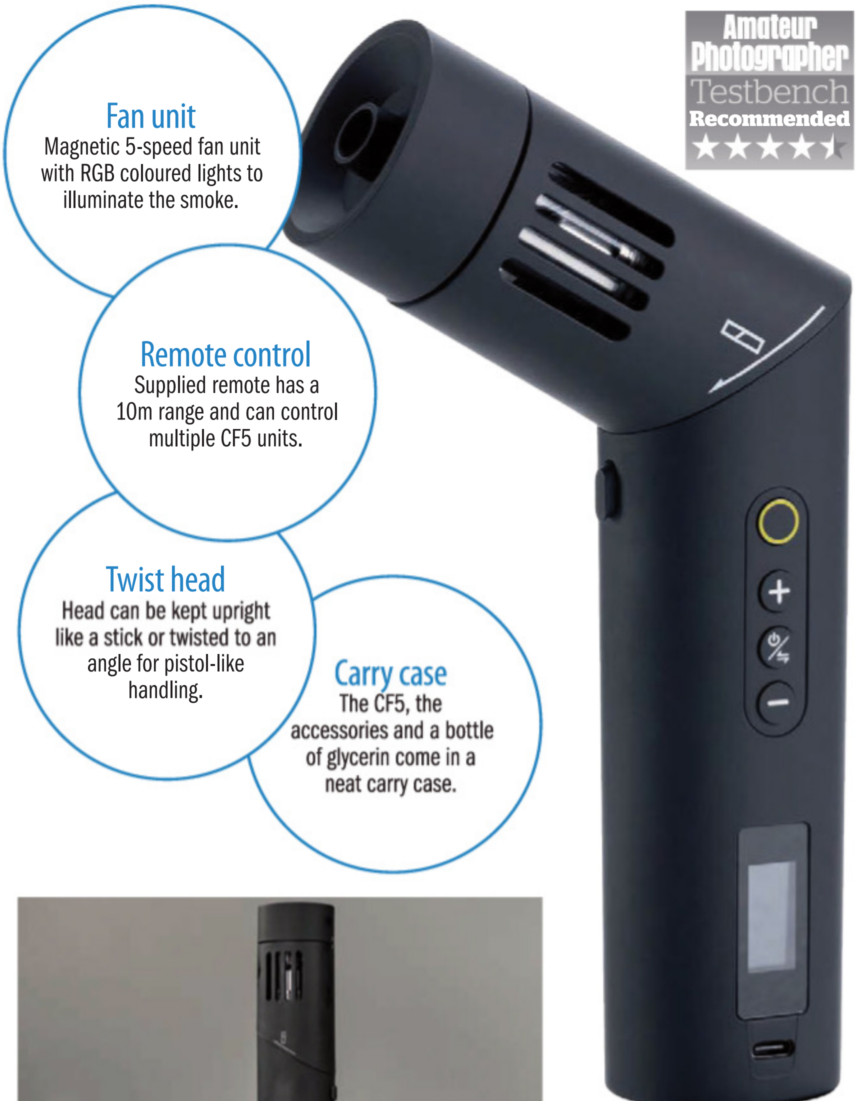
While the CF5 is a handheld unit that can be waved around at will, it also has a tripod thread so it can be planted in place and operated remotely from the camera position. Everything can be controlled either using the buttons on the main body and the fan unit, or via the supplied remote control. A display panel on the body helps navigate the numerous control combinations, while the remote allows multiple units to be controlled from a range of 10m. But with so many options controlled via so few buttons, it's advisable to keep the manual to hand.

Verdict

This is a very neat and useful fog machine that will suit still-life and product photographers as much as portrait photographers and videographers. It gives low-cost access to some cool effects, and it is controllable enough to give a hint of haze or the effect of a full-blown house fire. The battery life is good, the glycerine lasts well, and the fog doesn't smell or leave a film. In all, it's very good, especially for the price. I'll be using it a lot.

ALL PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE STREET PRICES

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★½

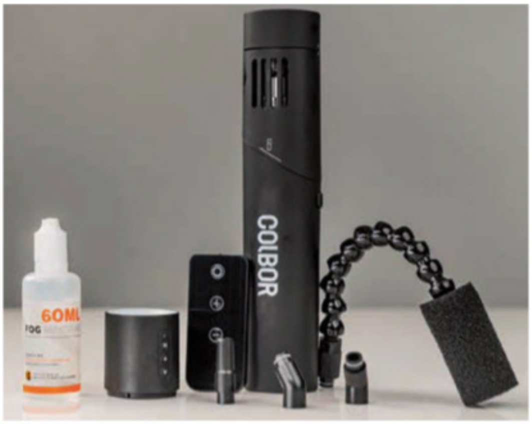


Fan unit
Magnetic 5-speed fan unit with RGB coloured lights to illuminate the smoke.

Remote control
Supplied remote has a 10m range and can control multiple CF5 units.

Twist head
Head can be kept upright like a stick or twisted to an angle for pistol-like handling.

Carry case
The CF5, the accessories and a bottle of glycerin come in a neat carry case.



Left: A comprehensive set of accessories provides control over the smoke positioning

Below: The CF5 added a smoky atmosphere to this shot

At a glance

- Handheld smoke machine
- Built-in 2500mAh battery
- 30 mins of full power smoke per charge
- 12ml oil canister lasts 10 mins
- Weight 398g including fan

Professor Newman on...

Match as match can

The RGB colour space, and the colour matching experiments on which 'colour science' is based

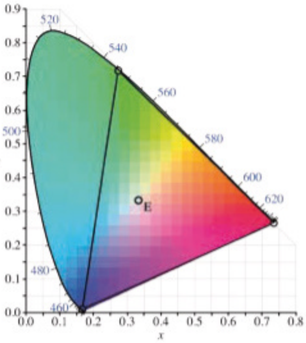
One of the problems with explaining scientific concepts is that scientists will often play fast and loose with the definition of words. At the start of a scientific paper, there will often be found a precise definition of the usage of particular words. What the lay reader often does not realise is that the scope of these definitions is solely the paper in question. I came across an example of the errors such a mistake can cause in a YouTube video, in which the presenter declared that the only operation that happened in raw processing was demosaicing, being under the mistaken impression that the terms 'red', 'green' and 'blue' had the same meaning when applied to camera colour filters, human vision, and the channels in an output colour space.

In this article, I'll make a start on explaining some of these differences, with reference to the colour matching experiments performed in the early 1930s, which form the basis of what we now call 'colour science'.

By this time, the tri-stimulus nature of human colour vision was well understood, and mathematicians had worked out a theory allowing the rules of 3-D space to be used for colour, based on the assumption that the way that primaries mix obeyed the same rules as for geometry (hence 'colour spaces'). The experimental work linking this to actual human perception were performed independently by two British physicists, WD Wright and J Guild, in the late 1920s. They both produced very similar results, and their work formed the basis of the 1932 CIE RGB colour space, on which subsequent 'colour science' has been based. It's worth noting that the total number of experimental subjects was just 17 individuals.

The subject peered through an eyepiece and saw a circle with a two-degree angle of view, split in two. Half was illuminated by a monochromatic light source, varying from 400nm (deep violet) to 700nm (deep red). The other half was lit using a mixture of three monochromatic primary sources. These were 435.8nm (called 'blue' but perceptually violet), 546.1nm and 700nm ('green' and 'red' respectively). The subject could adjust their relative strengths of the primaries and was asked to do so until the two halves of the circle matched in colour. The settings were recorded and used to produce a set of colour matching functions, defining the mixture of primaries needed to produce a perceptual match for each monochromatic source. An illustration of this was given in my previous article.

The resultant CIE RGB colour space diagram is shown above right. Here, the monochromatic colours form the upper periphery of the space, and their wavelengths are marked on that line. All the colours inside the periphery cannot be produced by a monochromatic source (which is why 'all the colours of the rainbow' is a small subset of the colours that we perceive). The locations of the three primaries are marked with circles.



The CIE 1931 chromaticity diagram was developed from the work of British physicists WD Wright and J Guild

These colour matching experiments revealed that the spectral sources between 400nm and 546nm (broadly between violet and green) could not be matched by any mix of the three primaries. This tallies with the geometrical notion that all such shades must lie within the triangle with the primaries at its corners.

Guild and Wright overcame this by allowing a negative red contribution. This is, of course physically impossible. It was done by adding a controllable amount of the red primary into the target colour sample to be matched, which is mathematically equivalent to subtracting red.

Returning to my initial point, the 'red', 'green' and 'blue' primaries in the CIE RGB colour space are not just any 'red' 'green' or 'blue' light. Instead, they are specific monochrome sources. Moreover, they are physically impossible (at least as far as the 'red' primary goes), and bear no relation to the dyes in the colour filter array of a camera.

Bob Newman is currently Professor of Computer Science at the University of Wolverhampton. He has been working with the design and development of high-technology equipment for 35 years and two of his products have won innovation awards. Bob is also a camera nut and a keen amateur photographer

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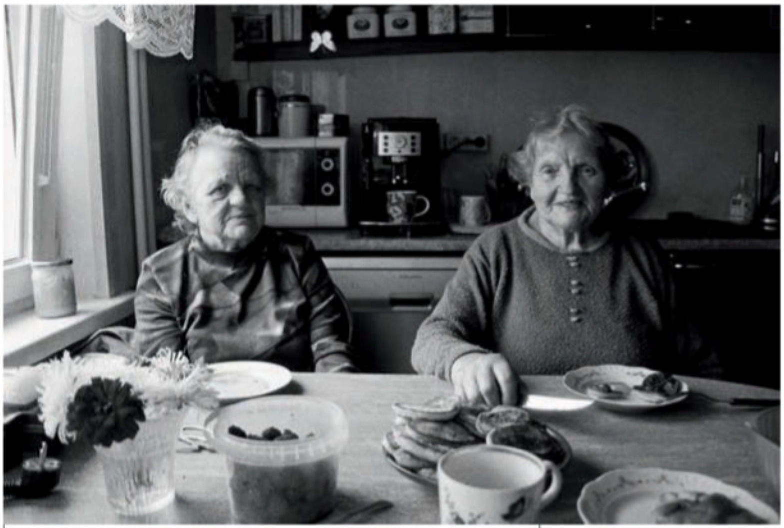
Round One: The Best of the Rest

The APOY judges choose their favourite images that didn't make the top ten of our Black & White category

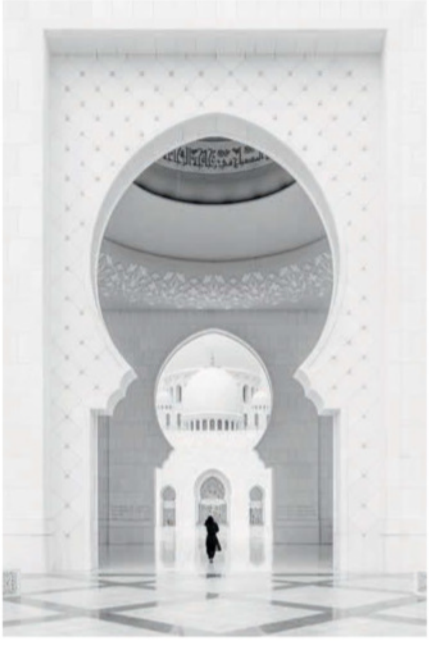


Jessica Miller, deputy online editor, chooses **Pancakes with Grandmother by Kadi Ritson, Derbyshire**

Ilford HP5

Jessica says: 'The photographer's grandmother and her sister sit across from us at the table, sharing a huge pile of freshly made pancakes. Evoking emotion and memory, we get a glimpse of the photographer's relatives from their own eyes. The composition is beautifully set as if we are right at the breakfast table with them, eating and sharing stories. It takes me back to times with my own grandparents and their siblings.

'Taken on Ilford HP5, black & white was definitely the best choice for documenting this moment. It gives a nostalgic feel and without the distraction of colour it brings us in to really notice and consider the smells, the relatives' expressions and character, the way the kitchen is laid out, the kinds of conversations they might be having. We perhaps take for granted these moments with our elderly relatives, so this is a very precious photo indeed.'



Geoff Harris, deputy editor, chooses **Entering the Mosque by Matteo Strassera, Italy**

Canon EOS R5, 14-35mm at 32mm, 1/160sec at f/8, ISO 100

Geoff says: 'As a keen travel photographer, I understand the challenges of shooting in and around mosques, particularly if your subject is a woman. We always need to balance our desire to get a great shot with sensitivity to the traditions and culture of Islamic countries or communities, and I think the photographer has achieved that here. The soft whites contrast beautifully with the black of the mosque visitor, and the exquisite calligraphy and decoration is also nicely captured – not to mention the captivating graphic shape of the arch. A deceptively simple but satisfying image and a very visually literate one.'

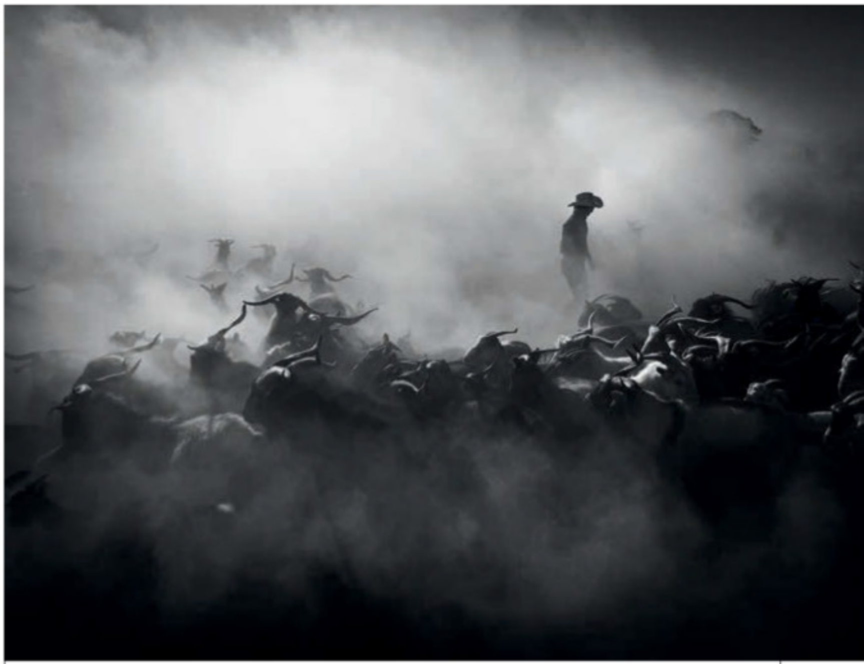
Ailsa McWhinnie, APOY 2025 project manager, chooses **Marabou Stork, alias 'The Undertaker' by Alison Middleton, Devon**

Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, 420mm, f/7.1, ISO 400

Ailsa says: 'I look at thousands of images over the course of APOY's ten rounds, so it takes a lot for one to stick in my memory. This instantly caught my attention as I was in the process of shortlisting images, and there was no doubt it would make my personal top ten (even though it didn't quite reach the final top ten after all the judges' scores were collated).

'For me, this is a wildlife shot elevated to fine art. It's about line, shape and tone, and the framing is outstanding. The texture of the stork's skin and the claw that's wrapped around the straight leg appears almost prehistoric. Contrast that with the softness of the white feathers and the pattern of the darker ones, all set against the deepest black background (incidentally, the separation between the darker plumage and the background is "chef's kiss") and you've got yourself an image that's going to be hard to beat for me this year.

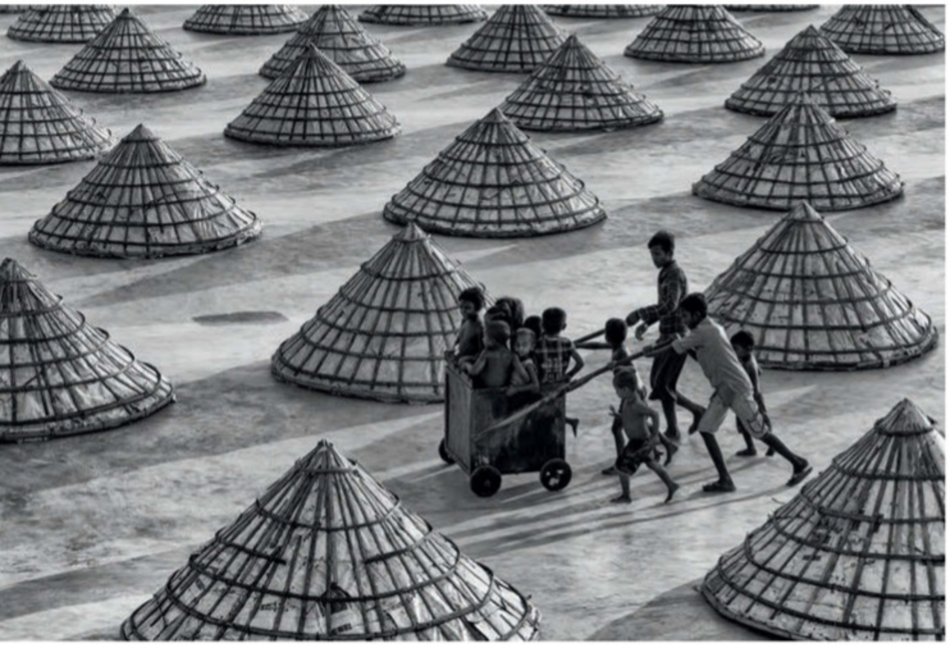
'It would have been so easy for Alison to include the whole bird in the frame. I'm so glad she didn't, as with this, she's created an image that's a whole lot more than the sum of its parts.'



Nigel Atherton, editor, chooses **A Sea of Horns by Rachael Ryan, Australia**

Apple iPhone 15 Pro, 24mm equivalent, 1/12,000sec at f/1.8, ISO 80

Nigel says: 'I love this shot by Rachael Ryan taken in the Australian outback. The dust kicked up by the cattle is backlit by the sun, creating a beautifully atmospheric canvas upon which the perfectly placed characters are rendered as semi-silhouettes. The cattle herd that runs from the foreground into the middle distance creates a sense of depth and movement, but the focal point is the lone cowboy who is perfectly positioned on the third to create a sense of visual harmony amid the chaos. The image reminds me of those evocative old Marlboro ads, which never inspired me to smoke but did make me want to visit the US. Fortunately, cowboys exist in other countries too, so you don't have to risk a brush with ICE to get pictures like this one. An interesting, though no longer surprising, footnote is that Rachael took this picture using her Apple iPhone 15 Pro.'



Peter Dench, acting features editor, chooses **Childhood by Azim Khan Ronnie, Bangladesh**

Canon EOS R5, 70-200mm at 104mm, 1/400sec at f/8, ISO 200

Peter says: 'Amid a hypnotic grid of drying cones at a rice processing plant in Brahmanbaria, Bangladesh, a group of children transforms industry into playground. Once used to haul rice, the battered metal cart becomes a chariot of joy, careering between the conical obstacles as laughter echoes across the concrete. More than 30 children turned the mill into their own obstacle course, but it's this fleeting moment of teamwork, energy and childhood abandon that steals the show. What elevates this image is its blend of symmetry and spontaneity – a joyous interruption to industrial order. It brought back a rush of memory: school milk duty with my friend Marc, and launching ourselves, trolley and all, down a grassy bank. The tools of work reimagined for play – a universal language of youth. This image is black & white photography with soul.'

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Move on from megapixels

Dan Mold (*Viewpoint,* 1 July) is right to suggest we move on from pixel count as a yardstick to compare cameras.

High megapixel counts are not without their downside (noise, file size, speed) and many photographers prefer faster burst speeds to images taken at resolutions that will probably never be seen. A 50MP image has to be printed to A0 (120x80cm) to be seen at full resolution, and even a flagship monitor like the Apple Pro XDR can only just display a 20.4MP image from my OM System OM-1 camera. If your pictures aren't sharp, it's likely down to the old culprits: focusing errors, camera shake or subject movement. Above 20MP, camera resolution is way down the list.

Dr Michael J Jordan MA MB FRCA LRPS

LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS A SAMSUNG 256GB PRO PLUS MICRO SDXC CARD. NOTE: PRIZE APPLIES TO UK AND EU RESIDENTS ONLY

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Old fogies

Alan Cox wrote that people pictures are unwelcome at camera clubs and that this is a main put-off for youngsters. This isn't new. In my youth I once visited a club hoping to meet like-minded photographers and found only a lot of old, retired men. One told me that their club doesn't like Cartier-Bresson's photography. As an admirer of HCB who liked documentary and environmental portraits I instantly felt rebuffed. Needless to say I did not join, and found a rival club who were more tolerant.

But over the years when I've suggested to young photographers that they give our club a try, inevitably the reply is they don't want to sit in the dark with a load of old fogies looking at boring landscapes.

I admired Alan Cox's submitted photograph as it illustrates contemporary middle-class youngsters socialising – a more refreshing view of childhood than the typical images of deprived children living in squalor, which it seems 'serious' documentary photographers are supposed to aspire to. Keep going, Alan – don't be downhearted.

John Heywood

No photos

Last week I was in Hastings and decided to take a photograph of a very interesting modern office building, situated in a small public square in the centre of town. Immediately a security guard appeared, informing me that taking photos of the building was forbidden. I asked him to show me a notice stating that, but there were none around. I then asked if it was a local government building and he said it was not, but it belonged to an insurance company. I questioned him as to why taking a photo of such a building was not allowed, and he just kept repeating the same mantra about it being forbidden.

Recently I came across a similar situation at Lewes train station, which is very photogenic. As I started to take a photo, a message came over the loudspeaker that taking photographs is forbidden there. Since I have taken photos many times in other stations, I was very surprised to be told that I could not do so there. I'd welcome some advice.

Hendrik Woolf

In the UK there is no law against taking photos of people or buildings as long as you are on public property. The snag is that quite a lot of what we think is public space is actually private. If you were indeed in a public square, then the security guard has no authority to stop you.

Railway stations are technically private property. But it does seem churlish to ban photography, given how photogenic they are; but the world is full of petty officials and paranoia about litigation or terrorism. You could always try asking next time. It would be interesting to see what would happen if you used a phone, not a camera.

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One of several stock photos taken at Lewes station available to download on the Getty Images website

THIS WEEK WE ASKED...

How do you organise your photos?

You said...

Jeff Spitzer @JeffSpitzer2025
Folders: Place/Event, with Month & Year. We're pretty simple folk out here in Oklahoma.

Duncan van der Velden
My organisation lies in Explorer on my NAS. Folders with years, subfolders with months. Then the photo folders, named by the date reversed and the topic of the shoot, fo example '20250524 - Haugesund Viking farm'. That structure translates to the LR library, so I can keep using a single catalogue.

Lycia Moore
iMac photo libraries – family, general photos, then voluntary events. In year then subject order.

Glyn Harri
Lightroom, in year, month, day, then place. Similar on iCloud. iPhotos are in date order anyway but have additional albums for type or place.

Steve Whitefoot
I have three separate Lightroom catalogues, for personal, business and a voluntary event that I do. The photos for each catalogue are located in a separate folder locations, but within each one they are all organised within year folders, then by date. Within each date folder there will also be subfolders for any output, ie Hi-res, Social media etc. But, and most importantly, for searchability, they are all keyworded as I import them into Lightroom.

Mhairi Chambers
Named folders-main subject, e.g. Sports,Wildlife etc then subfolders for each sport...football, rugby, basketball etc and a separate one for motorsports.Usually named and dated in a way that I can find things easily!

RCTPhoto marathon
We use SmugMug.com.

Ben Burchell
I bring chaos to order with how I organise my photos. I try to put them in some sort of date order, but eventually that falls apart.

Rachel Dee
By year, and then albums for different themes, events and trips, techniques like ICM, and some for specific lenses.

T Lloyd Gallman @PhotogLloyd
Organise???

ThioStory™ @ThioStory
I store on TéléGram mobile app. It gives us free unlimited cloud storage with some tricks, and I knew its tricks. But for videos, this is the challenge. Some of them I compressed then upload, but most of them stay in HDD. I choose HDD over SSD for storage.

Share your photos and comments with us on social!

See page 3 for how to contact us

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Pink Echoes on the Atacama
by Grant Sloane

Fujifilm X-T4, XF 55-200mm, 1/2700sec at f/6.4, ISO 320, 77.9mm

'Andean flamingos slice the crystalline dawn above Laguna Chaxa, their rose wings mirrored in the salt-flat glass. Shallow mineral pools shimmer. At 2,400m, the Atacama's icy volcanoes guard this hush of color; even the driest desert breathes here, whispering life with every synchronised beat, glide, and reflected ripple.'

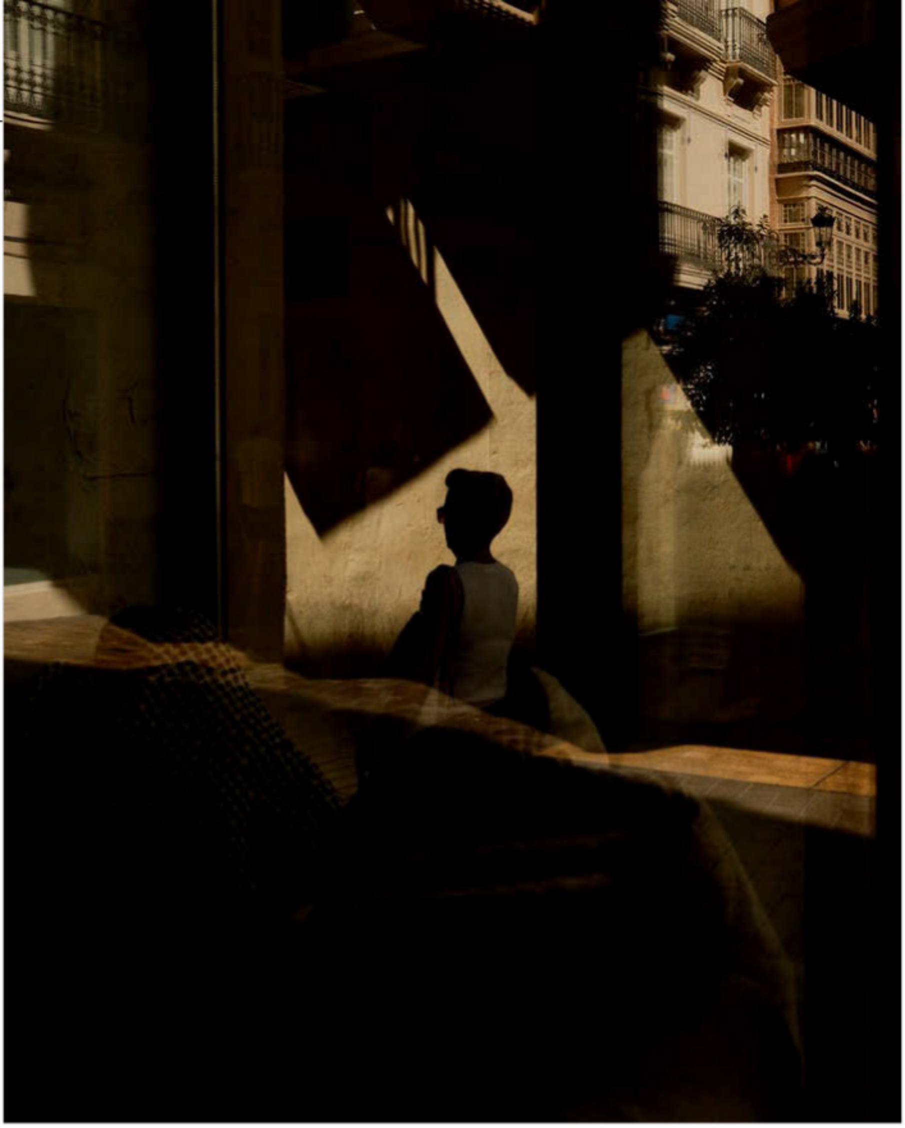
Instagram: @rolling_sloane
Website: www.rolling-sloane.com

It's good to share

Lunchtime Shadows – Seville by Munteanu Constantin

Fujifilm X100VI, 1/500sec at f/10, ISO 500, Kodak Gold 200 film simulation

'Sometimes photography is about seeing, not searching. Walking through streets of Seville at lunchtime, I caught sight of this wall where strong sunlight intersected with reflections and shadows. The Fujifilm X100VI, paired with Kodak Gold 200 film simulation, captured the scene exactly as I wanted it – simple.'
Instagram: @constantin.streetlife



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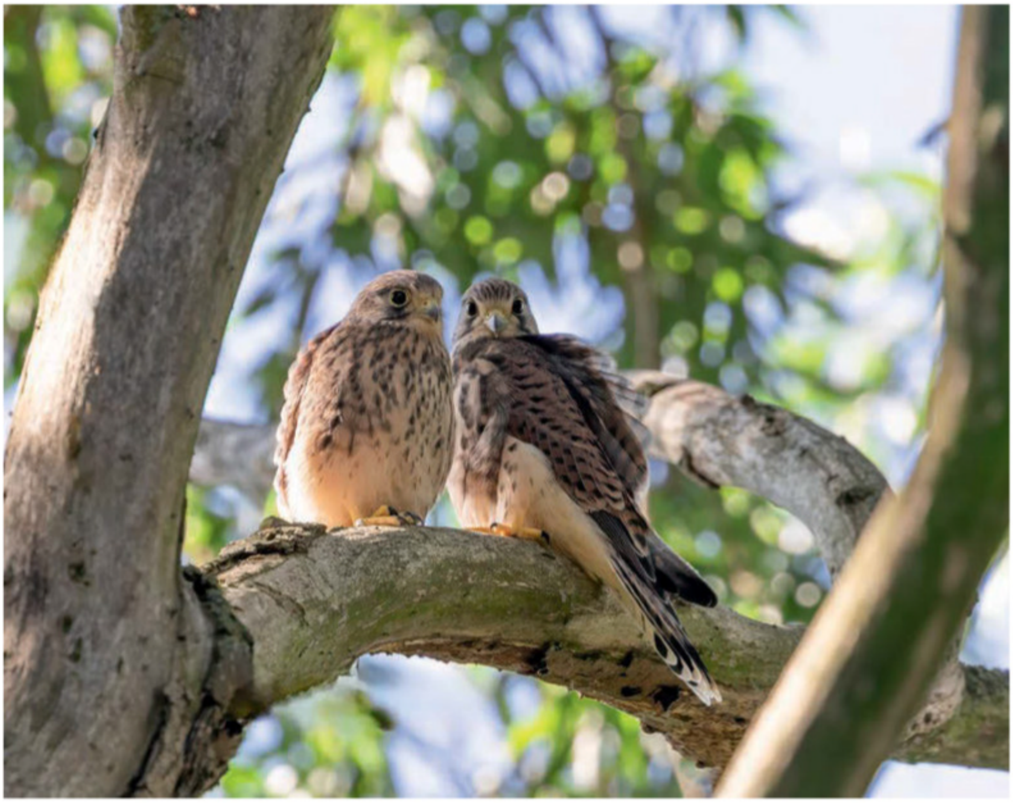

New Life by Martin Buckley

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6L IS II USM, 1 /320sec at f/5.6, ISO 200, 400mm

'A walk through my local woods proved fruitful. I spotted three juvenile kestrels perching up not far from me. As I lifted the camera, two of them obligingly posed for me. A great experience all round.'
Facebook: M R B Photography
Instagram: @theromford_wildlifer

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Amateur Photographer
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Star quality
Leica Q3

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Canon EOS R7
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Amateur Photographer
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Brian May
Loose Canons

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Amateur Photographer
Fabulous film
Roger Bamber
Sprocket man
Posh pinhole
Digitise your film

20 JUNE 2023

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Seabird safari
Amateur Photographer
Nikon Z 8
Tutu
Mickey takers
America's urban wildlife

11 JULY 2023

COVER STORY Nikon Z 8 big review **INSIDE** Coastal birds, urban wildlife shots, Mickey Mouse-themed cameras

Sigma 16mm F1.4
Amateur Photographer
Summer light
From films to rolls of film
Lightroom masterclass
The 100 inch 'Peeping Tom'

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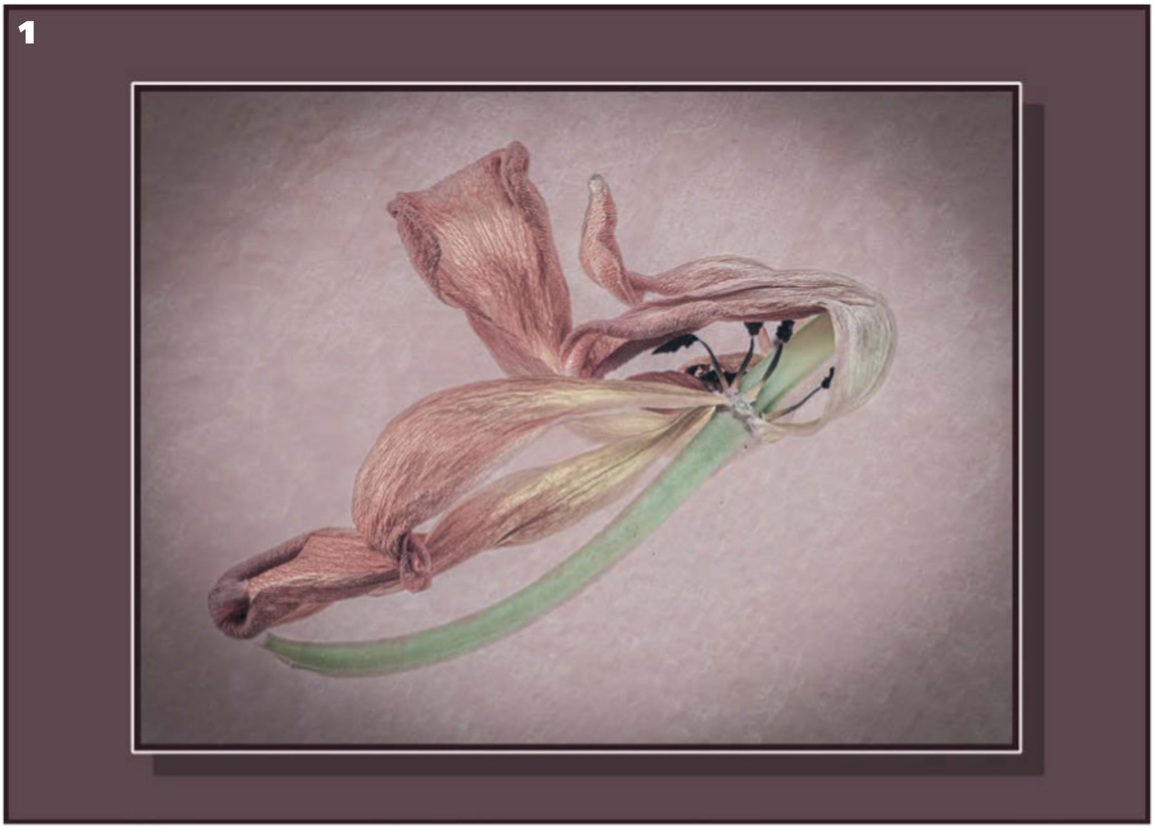

1 Beauty When Fading by Sarah Horrocks

2 Iris by Beryl Gleave

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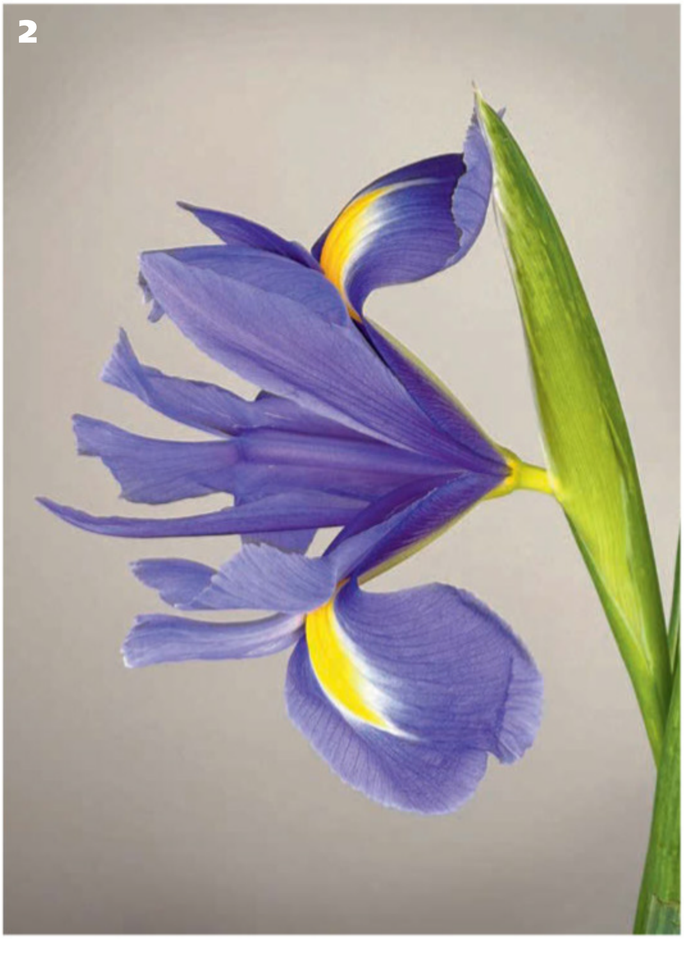

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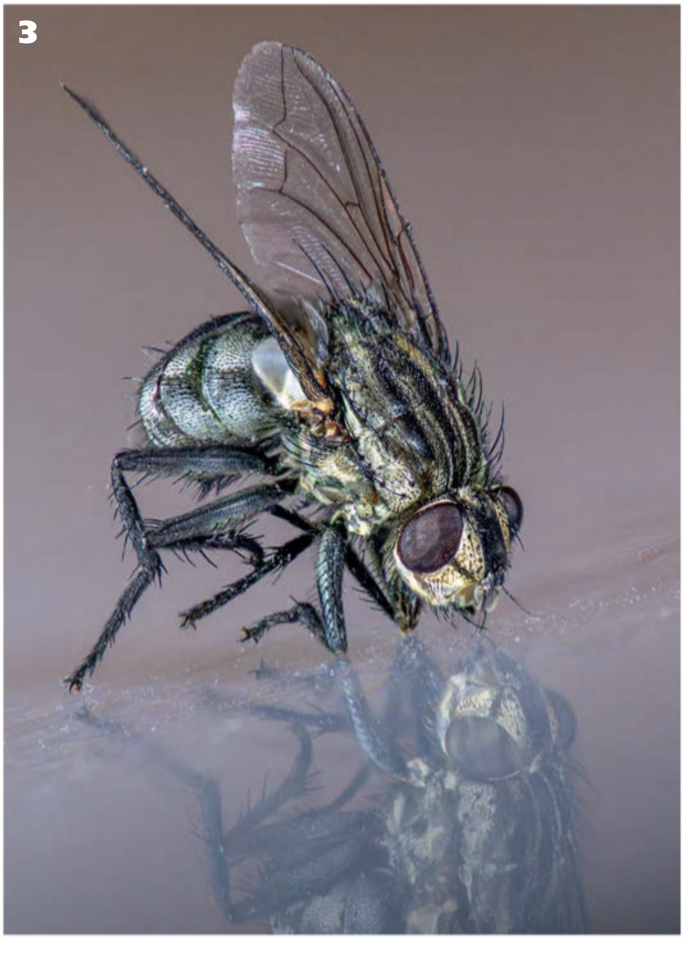


4

Join the Club

Conwy Camera Club, celebrating its 80th anniversary, is a friendly club for all lovers of photography

When was the club founded?
Our club was founded in 1945 with one of the founder members being Alec Orr. This year we are thrilled to be celebrating our 80th anniversary and have lots of exciting things planned for our members. This makes us the oldest as well as the largest photographic club in North Wales.

What does your club offer to new members?
New and prospective members are all very welcome to attend a couple of meetings before committing to taking out membership. We also have a temporary membership that is for four consecutive weeks and the cost of this would be deducted from the full Membership cost, should they wish to join as a full member.

Describe a typical club meeting
We meet every Tuesday at 7.30pm and our season runs from September to May. We have a mix of in-person meetings and Zoom. Our meetings include talks on many genres of photography. We also have throughout the year, ten internal club competitions judged by external judges. The club has a very warm, welcoming, social atmosphere and we enjoy in-house evenings where members get to discuss and show their preferred genre of photography.

Do you invite guest speakers?
Yes, we have speakers from all over the UK. Zoom has enabled us to have excellent speakers from further afield, for example the iconic Charlie Waite. We have even had a guest speaker from overseas.

Do members compete in regional or national competitions?
Yes, several of our members compete in national and international competitions and have enjoyed

considerable success over the years. Additionally, some of our members also hold photographic qualifications from the PAGB, the WPF and the RPS.

How many members do you have?
Our membership has been steadily increasing year on year and we now have 90 members.

Are any residential trips or outings planned?
Along with our weekly meetings we also hold workshops which cover several areas of photography. These workshops are a great social gathering for our members and also offers practical help and support from our more experienced photographers to those less experienced members in a friendly learning environment. We are very fortunate to be located in a very beautiful, scenic and historic area.

For the past two years, many members have travelled down to London for two days of photography, taking in the city sights.

Do you have any funny stories about the club?
Not so much funny but romantic – we have a couple of members who met at the club and are now happily married. We feel honoured to have played a part in their happy ever after.

What are the club's goals for the future?
Our ongoing objective is to provide a place for photographers of all abilities to gather together and share their enjoyment of photography and learn new skills in a friendly environment. We are very community-focused and we assist our local Town Council during events.

We also have members' images displayed on a screen in a local shop. We have accumulated an extensive archive of images of our local area from 1930 to the present day. We are assisting the local scouts club to gain a photography badge as part of our 80th celebrations. There will be an exciting exhibition of 80 years portraits, where members have photographed an individual who was born in each year from when we were founded; this is being displayed in our local Culture Centre. We are also holding an open day where the community can come along and see what we do. AP

5

Club essentials

Conwy Camera Club

Conwy, North Wales.

Meets: Tuesdays 7.30pm, September to May

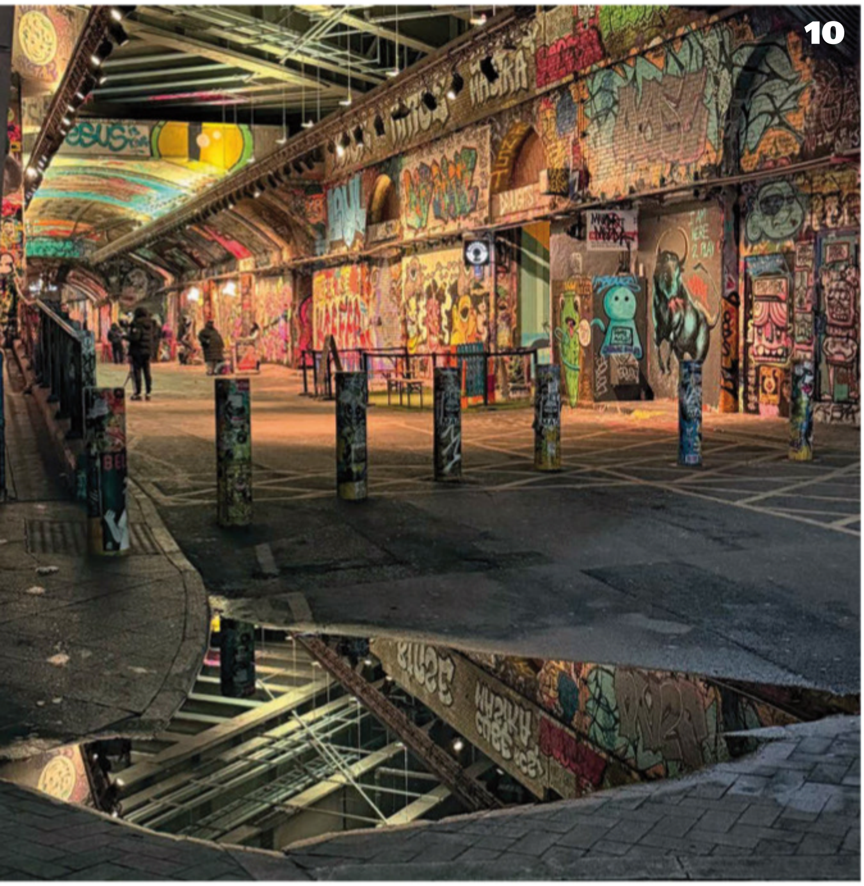
Membership: £40 a year

Contact: www.conwycameraclub.com/contact/membership-enquiry-form/

Website: www.conwycameraclub.com

5 Cold Walk Home by Martin Soper

6 Still Waiting by Don Liepins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7 Hard Life in a Face by Tony Davies

8 Damselfly by Ian Wright

9 Sparrow Hawk Attack by Trish Styles

10 Leake Street Graffiti by Daniel Richardson

11 Crop Curve by Daniel Ellis

12 Brief Encounter by Robert Prenton-Jones

13 US Embassy by Susan Clark

14 Not Just Black and White by Vicky Marginson

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A round-up of the AP testing team's favourite and most highly rated kit, including both cameras and all kinds of accessories, across a wide range of price points

OM System Tough TG-7

● £499 ● explore.omsystem.com

This latest model in a long line of class-leading rugged cameras is waterproof to 15m, shockproof against a 2.1m drop, crushproof and freezeproof. The 25-100mm equivalent lens is paired with a 12MP sensor, with in-body stabilisation to combat shake. Viewing is via a 3in LCD. The TG-7 is also one of the few cameras of its type that can record raw files.

★★★★☆ **Reviewed 2 Apr 2024**

Canon PowerShot G7 X Mark III

● £699 ● www.canon.co.uk

This lovely little pocket camera provides a good range of features for both photography and video. You get a 20MP 1in sensor, 24-100mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 zoom lens, 4K 30p video recording, and a tilting rear screen. It's ideal for those who'd like more advanced controls than on a smartphone.

★★★★☆ **Reviewed 28 Sep 2019**

Fujifilm X100VI

● £1,599 ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

The sixth version of Fujifilm's charismatic rangefinder-styled compact boasts a 40MP APS-C sensor in front of its fixed 23mm f/2 lens. It also gains in-body stabilisation while barely increasing in size. Traditional analogue control dials are joined by a unique hybrid optical / electronic viewfinder and a tilting touchscreen on the back. It's a truly fabulous camera.

★★★★★

Review 9 Apr 2024

Ricoh GR III

● £949 ● ricohgr.eu/en-gb

A favourite of street photographers, the GR III combines a 24MP APS-C sensor and a sharp 28mm equivalent f/2.8 lens in a slim, pocketable body. It offers sensitivities up to ISO 102,400 and 4fps shooting, while in-body image stabilisation helps keeps image sharp. Viewing is via a fixed 3in rear LCD or an optional optical viewfinder that slots onto the hot shoe.

★★★★☆

Reviewed 3 Aug 2019

Sony RX100 VII

● £1,049 ● www.sony.co.uk

Sony has somehow crammed a 24-200mm equivalent zoom, pop-up electronic viewfinder, tilting screen, 20fps shooting and 4K video recording into a body that you can slip into a jacket pocket. With the firm's latest AF technology also on board, it's without doubt the most accomplished pocket camera on the market.

★★★★½

Reviewed 5 Oct 2019

Sony RX10 IV

● £1,499 ● www.sony.co.uk

This sets a new standard for superzoom cameras, with a 24-600mm equivalent lens, 20MP 1in sensor, and 24fps continuous shooting. Its SLR-shaped body hosts a large electronic viewfinder and a decent set of physical controls. It's the best all-in-one camera for wildlife or travel photography that you can buy right now.

★★★★★

Reviewed 2 Dec 2017

Canon EOS 250D

● £769 with 18-55mm IS lens ● www.canon.co.uk

One of the smallest DSLRs around, the EOS 250D strikes a great balance between portability and usability. It's equipped with a novice-friendly Guided Mode, while Canon's Dual Pixel CMOS sensor provides excellent autofocus in live view. Image quality is very good, delivering vibrant colours and plenty of fine detail.

★★★★☆

Reviewed
7 Sep 2019

Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark IV

● £749 with 14-42mm lens ● www.olympus.co.uk

With a charismatic retro design, fine handling, highly effective in-body stabilisation and attractive JPEG output, Olympus has made a camera that's more pleasant to use than its entry-level competitors. Its 20MP sensor delivers good results up to ISO 3200 at least, and its tilting screen can be set to face forwards beneath the camera.

★★★★☆

Reviewed
26 Sep
2020

Fujifilm X-T5

● £1,699 body only ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

Fujifilm's latest X-T model is a great choice for serious enthusiast photographers. It boasts a 40MP APS-C sensor housed in a retro-styled body covered with traditional analogue control dials. Subject-detection autofocus, in-body stabilisation and Fujifilm's lovely colour modes round off an extremely desirable package.

★★★★★

Reviewed
3 Jan 2023

Canon EOS R50

● £899 with 15-45mm lens ● www.canon.co.uk

With the EOS R50, Canon has fitted some impressive technology into a compact and lightweight body. It boasts highly capable subject recognition autofocus coupled with rapid continuous shooting. Image quality is very pleasing too, with attractive files direct from the camera. It also works well with EF-mount DSLR lenses.

★★★★☆

Reviewed
6 Jun 2023

Fujifilm X-T50

● £1,299 body only ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

Fujifilm's mid-range line takes a major step up, with a 40MP sensor and in-body image stabilisation. Traditional analogue dials control exposure settings, while the firm's peerless Film Simulation colour modes get their own selection dial for the first time. The compact body is ideal for travel.

★★★★★

Reviewed
30 Jul 2024

Panasonic Lumix GH7

● £1,999 body only ● www.panasonic.com/uk

Panasonic's flagship Micro Four Thirds camera is aimed at videographers, but holds its own when capturing stills as well. Its 25MP sensor delivers plenty of detail, while enabling 5.7K recording at 60fps, or 4K at 120fps. Autofocus is much improved over the firm's older models, too. Pro-spec video functionality and effective in-body stabilisation round off a fine package.

★★★★★

Reviewed
5 Nov 2024

Fujifilm X-S10

● £999 with 15-45mm lens ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

Fujifilm's X-S10 brings a distinct change in design. It looks much like a conventional DSLR, with electronic dials for changing exposure settings. But you still get Fujifilm's signature fine image quality, along with in-body image stabilisation. The result is a camera that's perfect for APS-C DSLR users looking to upgrade to mirrorless.

★★★★★

Reviewed
23 Jan 2021

OM System OM-5

● £1,199 body only ● explore.omsystem.com

This small, fully featured and weather-sealed mirrorless camera is both a pleasure to use, and capable of great results. Its petite body finds space for an extensive complement of controls, along with class-leading 5-axis in-body image stabilisation, yet weighs in at just 414g. On-chip phase detection enables fast, decisive autofocus.

★★★★★

Reviewed
13 Dec 2022

OM System OM-1 Mark II

● £2,199 body only ● explore.omsystem.com

Updated version of this high-speed powerhouse gains some handy new features. It's capable of shooting at 120fps with focus fixed, or 50fps with AF, but now with double the buffer for extended bursts. AI subject detection recognises vehicles, animals and birds. It also boasts IP53-rated weather-sealing and includes class-leading stabilisation.

★★★★★

Review
12 Mar 2024

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Nikon Z f

● £2,149 body only ● www.nikon.co.uk

This lovely-looking full-frame mirrorless model combines plenty of substance with its classic retro styling. It boasts tactile top-plate dials for shutter speed, ISO and exposure compensation while delivering lovely image quality in both JPEG and raw. There's some cutting-edge technology on board too, including impressive subject detection autofocus.

★★★★½

Reviewed
9 Jan 2024

Sony Alpha 7 IV

● £2,179 body only ● www.sony.co.uk

Sony's enthusiast-focused full-frame mirrorless model sets a new standard in its class. Its 33MP full-frame sensor delivers excellent image quality, and it can shoot at up to 10fps. Its practically foolproof subject-detection AF can now recognise birds as well as humans and animals. A large, clear viewfinder and fully articulated touchscreen round off the package.

★★★★★

Reviewed
11 Dec 2021

Nikon D850

● £2,699 body only ● www.nikon.co.uk

This brilliant professional all-rounder provides a winning combination of high resolution and speed. Its 45.7MP sensor produces fine results at high ISOs, and the autofocus is incredibly responsive and accurate. Build quality and handling should satisfy the most demanding of users. It's an absolutely sensational camera capable of tackling any type of subject.

★★★★★

Reviewed
21 Oct 2017

Nikon Z 7II

● £2,899 body only ● www.nikon.co.uk

Nikon has delivered a sensible update to its flagship high-res model, with an additional SD card slot and slightly faster shooting. As before, its 45.7MP sensor gives stunning image quality, backed up by 5-axis in-body image stabilisation and fast, accurate autofocus. The viewfinder is superb, and F-mount SLR lenses can be used via the FTZ adapter.

★★★★½

Reviewed
6 Feb 2021

Nikon Z 8

● £3,789 body only ● www.nikon.co.uk

This stunning camera takes all the best bits of Nikon's flagship Z 9 and places them in a smaller, less-expensive body. Combining high resolution, rapid speed, cutting-edge autofocus and pro-level build, it's capable of shooting 45.7MP raw files at 20fps. It can also record 8K video. With its superb viewfinder and tilting rear screen, it's a stunningly capable camera.

★★★★★

Reviewed
11 Jul 2023

Canon EOS R6 Mark II

● £2,779 body only ● www.canon.co.uk

Based around a 24MP full-frame sensor, this brilliant all-rounder will do almost anything you might ask it to. It combines reliable subject-detection AF, rapid continuous shooting, and effective image stabilisation in a body that handles well and gives great results. It also works well with adapted EF-mount DSLR lenses.

★★★★★

Reviewed
21 Mar 2023

Sony Alpha 7R V

● £3,699 body only ● www.sony.co.uk

With its 61MP full-frame sensor, the A7R V provides class-leading image quality while adding a whole array of improvements over its predecessor. These include subject-detection AF, a larger, more detailed viewfinder, and a more flexible rear LCD design. For those whose needs are more about image quality than speed, it's probably the best full-frame camera you can buy.

★★★★★

Reviewed
17 Jan 2023

Leica M11

● £7,299 body only ● uk.leica-camera.com

Leica's 60MP full-frame rangefinder is a beautful anachronism – a camera type that has been obsolete for decades, yet which still remains an object of desire for many photographers. This elegant mix of the old and the modern offers triple-resolution raw recording, including 36MP and 18MP options, and vastly improved battery life. It's a really lovely camera that can deliver stunning results.

★★★★½

Reviewed
8 Mar 2022

Fujifilm GFX100S

● £5,499 body only ● www.fujifilm.eu/uk

Fujifilm's second-generation super-high resolution camera places a 102MP medium-format sensor in a body the size of a full-frame DSLR. On-chip phase detection provides rapid autofocus while in-body stabilisation allows the camera to be used handheld easily. It's perfect if you need to shoot in the field with compromising image quality.

★★★★★

Reviewed
8 May 2021

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Billingham Hadley Pro 2020

● £293 ● www.billingham.co.uk

The latest model in this iconic line of British-made satchel-style bags includes some well-considered updates, such as a detachable shoulder strap. It's impeccably constructed from premium materials to keep your kit protected, including Billingham's signature triple-layer canvas that's impermeable to water. It's pricey, but will last for decades.

★★★★★ **Reviewed 5 Oct 2019**

Vanguard Veo Active 42M

● £160 ● www.vanguardworld.co.uk

Vanguards's VEO Active backpacks are designed for hiking. This model is small enough to carry on a plane, but still has space for a camera and three lenses, plus a 13in laptop and personal items. It offers excellent protection thanks to its metal frame and padded insert.

★★★★★

Reviewed 19 Jul 2022

Gitzo Adventury 30L

● £239 ● www.gitzo.com/uk-en

This sizeable backpack will hold a pro-spec DSLR with a 70-200mm lens attached and a second body plus up to 4 lenses. An expandable roll top provides plenty of space for personal items, and the bag also boasts tablet and laptop compartments. It's comfortable to carry fully loaded and offers first-class protection.

★★★★★

Reviewed 8 Sep 2018

Essential Film Holder Kit

● £90 ● www.clifforth.co.uk

Many photographers either still enjoy shooting film, or have old negatives and slides that they'd like to digitise. Probably the best way to do this is to copy them using a DSLR or mirrorless camera. This easy-to-use device holds film flat over a lightbox for copying. It gives excellent results and is much quicker than using a scanner. ★★★★★

Reviewed 29 Aug 2020

NiSi Bluetooth Remote Control

● £29.90 ● nisioptics.co.uk

If you use strong neutral density filters, this device makes it much easier to work with the long exposures required. It connects to your smartphone by Bluetooth and is controlled by NiSi's free ND Calculator app. Camera connection cables cost £5.90 each.

★★★★½ **Reviewed 11 Jan 2022**

Novo Mantis T3 Mini Travel Tripod

● £70 ● www.ukdigital.co.uk

This neat 27cm-tall mini tripod has two-section carbon-fibre legs that can be set to three different angles, and chunky rubber feet that unscrew to reveal ground spikes. The matched MBH-25 ball head (£60) provides impressive strength, and an optional centre column is available for £30.

★★★★★

Reviewed 6 Feb 2021

Manfrotto 190 Go! MT190GOC4

● £299 ● www.manfrotto.com/uk-en

With 4-section carbon fibre legs that can each be set to four angles, this sturdy, versatile tripod achieves a maximum height of 147cm while folding down to 45cm, and weighs 1.35kg. But its party trick is a centre column that can be set horizontally for overhead or low-level shooting.

★★★★★

Reviewed 1 Jun 2019

Benro GD3WH

● £169 ● www.benroeu.com

This relatively lightweight and portable geared head employs an Arca Swiss type quick release. Three large control knobs, one for each axis of movement, drive the camera directly in the corresponding direction, allowing highly accurate setting of composition. With its sturdy magnesium alloy construction, it's rated to support a 6kg load.

★★★★★ **Reviewed 26 May 2018**

Vanguard VEO 2S AM-264TR

● £99 ● www.vanguardworld.co.uk

This unusual monopod boasts an extended height of 1630mm, a folded height of 565mm and a maximum load capacity of 6kg. Three foldable legs at the base provide a tri-stand platform, and are linked to the four-section carbon fibre leg via a ball joint that allows smooth panning and tilting motions.

★★★★★

Reviewed 30 May 2015

VANGUARD
VEO

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Adaptalux Studio Nature LED Macro Combo Pack

● £372 ● www.adaptalux.com

This clever modular LED system is perfect for lighting small subjects creatively. The pack includes a control pod with a built-in rechargeable battery, four flexible lighting arms (two white, one blue and one green), plus three diffusers and two colour filters. Always-on LED lighting makes it easy to visualise the results in real time.

★★★★★

Reviewed 20 Sep 2022

RØDE VideoMicro II

● £82 ● en.rode.com

RØDE's updated compact on-camera video microphone brings a number of welcome improvements. Along with a much-improved Helix shock-mount, it comes with cables for use with both cameras and smartphones, plus a choice of foam or furry windshields. Audio quality is a dramatic improvement over most cameras' built-in mics, too.

★★★★★ **Reviewed 20 Jun 2023**

Tenba Tools Cable Duo 4

● £20 ● uk.tenba.com

Not all handy accessories have to cost a fortune. This well-designed tech organiser pouch features a dual-compartment layout, with a shallow space on one side for cables, and a deeper one on the other for such things as battery chargers or computer mice. The simple rectangular design fits easily into a bag and the tough transparent covers make it easy to see what's inside.

★★★★★

Reviewed 20 Sep 2022

Formatt Hitech Onyx 85mm Seascape Kit

● £345 ● www.formatt-hitech.com

This 85mm filter kit is ideal for APS-C or Micro Four Thirds users. It includes a polariser, 6-stop neutral density, and 3-stop soft-edge and hard-edge ND grads. It'll fit filter threads up to 77mm, with step rings for 72mm, 67mm and 58mm supplied in the box.

★★★★½

Reviewed 6 Feb 2021

Calibrite ColorChecker Studio

● £500 ● www.colourconfidence.com

Previously known as X-Rite i1 Studio, this kit enables users to adopt a completely colour-managed workflow, from capture through display to print. It allows profiling of cameras, scanners, monitors, projectors and printers, and works with both Mac and Windows computers. It's a great tool for any photographer who likes to print at home.

★★★★★ **Reviewed 19 Jan 2019**

Kase Revolution Magnetic Circular Entry Level Kit

● £230-£285 ● www.kasefilters.com

These clever kits include circular polarising, 3-stop and 6-stop neutral density filters that snap magnetically onto adapters that screw into your lens. This considerably speeds up the process of using filters and encourages you to use them creatively. Kits are available in 77mm, 82mm, and 95mm sizes, with adapter rings from 49mm up.

★★★★★

Reviewed 21 Feb 2023

Epson Expression Photo XP970

● £219 ● www.epson.co.uk

An update to the XP960, which won our coveted gold award, this impressive multifunctional unit provides A3 printing ability while retaining a compact footprint. Along with a conventional USB connection, it can print over Wi-Fi, or directly from an SD card or USB stick, controlled using the excellent colour LCD touchscreen. Other useful features include an A4 scanner and double-sided document printing.

★★★★★

Biolite Charge 80 PD

● £70 ● uk.bioliteenergy.com

Powerbanks can be invaluable when you want to keep shooting for longer. This device houses a 20,000mAh Li-ion battery, which is capable of replenishing the average camera battery up to ten times. It can also be used to power certain cameras directly.

★★★★★ **Reviewed 10 Jul 2021**

Fujifilm Instax Mini Link 2

● £115 ● www.instax.co.uk

Powered by a built-in rechargeable battery, this smart little printer connects to your smartphone via Bluetooth and is controlled using an attractively designed and intuitive app. It's small enough to slip into a coat pocket or bag, and delivers gorgeous little prints with fine detail and vivid colour.

★★★★★

Reviewed 30 Aug 2022

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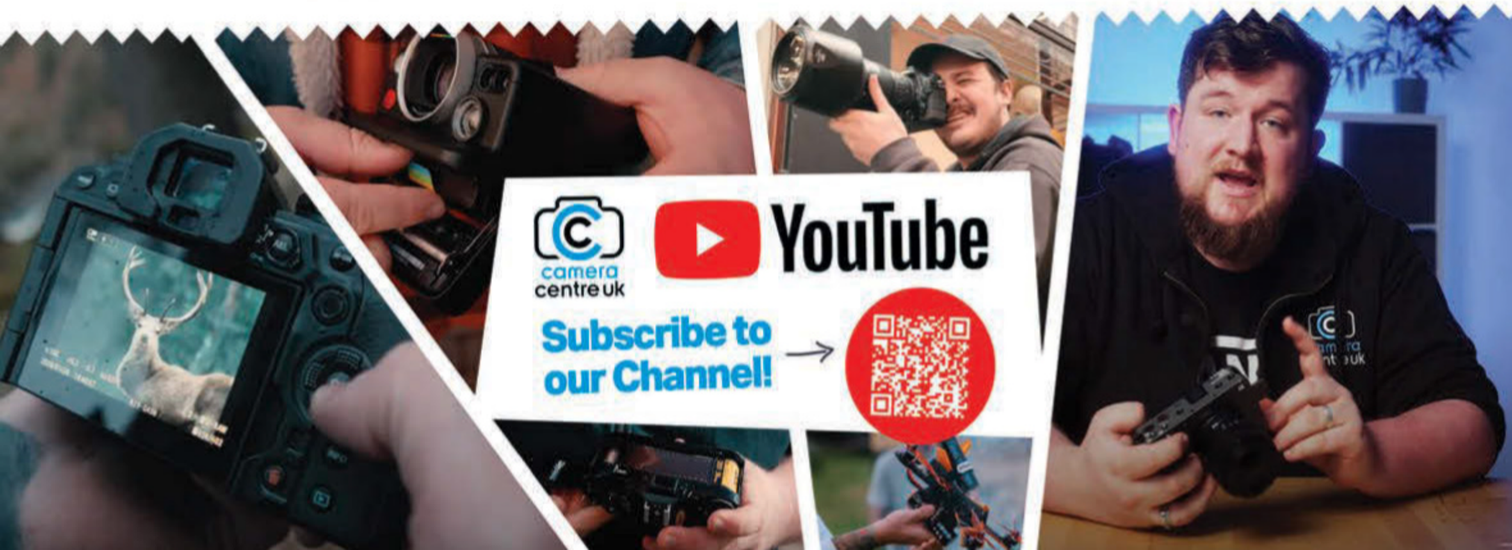

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CANON EOS R7

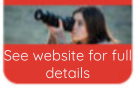
Explore the Wild

SAVE £370!
Available 30.04.25 - 09.07.25

32.5 MEGA PIXELS | 15 fps | 3.1" | IS | 4K

The EOS R7 is built around an APS-C sized sensor, so lenses offer 1.6x more telephoto reach than the equivalent focal length on a full-frame camera. You'll feel like you're right next to your subject, able to capture frame-filling animal portraits and powerful action pictures that are full of impact.

LENS REWARD
Benefit from up to £200 cashback when purchasing RF lenses



See website for full details

BODY ONLY	+ RF-S 18-150MM IS STM
£1,079	£1,499
Normally £1,449	Normally £1,799

FUJIFILM X-E5

The Refined Classic

NEW!
Expected August 2025

40.2 MEGA PIXELS | 20 fps | 3.0" | IS | 6K

A modern classic can't simply mimic what has gone before. Nor can it ignore what has preceded it. It should respect its lineage, by refining a concept without losing its essence. FUJIFILM X-E5 embodies what it means to be a modern classic, combining a sophisticated, elegant design with analogue controls that inspire image making.

Scan here to watch our hands-on review!

BODY ONLY	+ XF 23MM F/2.8	+ XF 50MM F/2
£1,299	£1,549	£1,549

Available in Black or Silver designs.
Pre-order to receive one of the FIRST cameras available in the UK.

CANON POWERSHOT V1

£959
Stock expected late July!
See website to learn more.

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£1,799
Normally £2,199

CANON EOS R5

SAVE £270

BODY ONLY
£2,879
Normally £3,149

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Half the Size, Twice the Story

Make time for your photography with X half; a camera dedicated to distraction-free creativity.

A default vertical format, 2-in-1 imagery and Fujifilm's legendary colour reproduction all in a compact body, X half combines a classic image-making experience

NEW!

Expected Soon
£699
Available in 3 colours

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Normally £1,679

CANON RF 75-300MM F/4-5.6

NEW!

£289
Limited stock now available!
See website to learn more.

CANON RF 200-800MM F/6.3-9 IS USM

SAVE £260

OUR PRICE
£2,039
Normally £2,299

NIKON Z5 II

Truly together

FREE GIFTS
Receive 2x Lexar 64GB SDXC Cards & a Nikon EN-EL15C Battery worth £150

24.5 MEGA PIXELS | 30 fps | 3.2" | IS | 4K

Make the leap to full-frame photography with the Z5 II mirrorless camera and you'll get more detail, more depth, more space to create. The wide Z mount and full-frame IBIS sensor open incredible possibilities for handheld shooting in any light. Their most powerful image-processing engine boosts performance, bringing more speed and fluidity to everything you do.

Scan here to watch our hands-on review!

BODY ONLY	+ Z 24-50MM F/4-6.3	+ Z 24-70MM F/4
£1,599	£1,859	£2,129

PANASONIC LUMIX S1 II

Discover the Art of Speed

NEW!
AND NOW IN STOCK

24.1 MEGA PIXELS | 70 fps | 3.0" | IS | 6K

Equipped with a newly developed partially stacked CMOS sensor, the LUMIX S1 II turns fleeting moments into stunning photos, records ultra-smooth high-frame-rate video, and delivers up to 15 stops of dynamic range, capturing every instant with breathtaking intensity.

Scan here to watch our hands-on review!

BODY ONLY	+ 24-60MM F/2.8	+ 24-105MM
£2,899	£3,299	£3,599
	Normally £3,799	

12 months 0% finance available. Plus, register your LUMIX S1 II with Panasonic UK & extend your warranty for a total of 5 years! See website.

NIKON Z 8

SAVE £800

BODY ONLY
£2,999
Normally £3,799

NIKON Z 85MM F/1.8 S

SAVE £120

£659
Normally £779

NIKON Z 180-600MM F/5.6-6.3 VR

SAVE £100

£1,699
Normally £1,799

LEICA D-LUX 8

100 Years of Leica Edition

This anniversary edition, with its clean lines and nickel-coloured accents, pays homage to the Leica I from 1925. Design details such as the conical collar around the shutter release and the cross-milled pattern on the top dials reflect its heritage. Another distinctive feature is the black leatherette trim – its texture echoes that of M-Cameras.

NEW!

Limited stock now available!
£1,600

OM SYSTEM OM-5 MARK II

Ready for the trail, no matter the weather

The OM-5 Mark II is an ultra-compact, lightweight mirrorless camera designed for outdoor enthusiasts and adventurers who demand top-tier image quality without the bulk. Weighing only 418g, it's the ideal companion for travel, hiking photography, and spontaneous videography - offering robust performance in a highly portable form.

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TAMRON 16-30MM

f/2.8 Di III VXD G2

Designed for still photographers and video content creators alike, the 16-30mm f/2.8 G2 offers unparalleled flexibility for ultra-wide-angle shooting. Ideal for landscapes, architecture, dynamic action and close-up tabletop shots, this lens is a true workhorse for modern creatives.

Sony E / Nikon Z Mount

£849

Expected Mid-August 2025

SIGMA 17-40MM F/1.8 DC | A

Designed for APS-C mirrorless cameras

This lens offers the convenience of a zoom lens with a constant aperture of f/1.8 throughout the zoom range. Taking advantage of a large aperture comparable to a prime lens, the lens is suitable for low-light environments such as indoor and night scenes, as well as for expression using large bokeh.

NEW!

Expected Mid July

£779

Available for L-Mount, Sony E-Mount, Fujifilm X Mount & Canon RF mount

TAMRON 17-70MM

F/2.8 DI III-A VC RXD

SONY E / FUJIFILM X

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Normally £679

TAMRON 28-75MM

F/2.8 DI III VXD G2

SONY E / NIKON Z

SAVE £250

OUR PRICE **£599**

Normally £849

TAMRON 28-75MM

F/2.8 DI III VXD G2

SONY E

SAVE £20

OUR PRICE **£399**

Normally £419

SIGMA 500MM

F/5.6 DG DN OS | SPORTS

SONY E / L MOUNT

OUR PRICE **£2,779**

Finance options available

SIGMA 16-300MM

F/3.5-6.7 DC OS | C

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SIGMA 24-70MM

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14-150 F4/5.6 ED MKII	£349
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40-150 F4 Pro box	£649
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SQA 120 back early	£99
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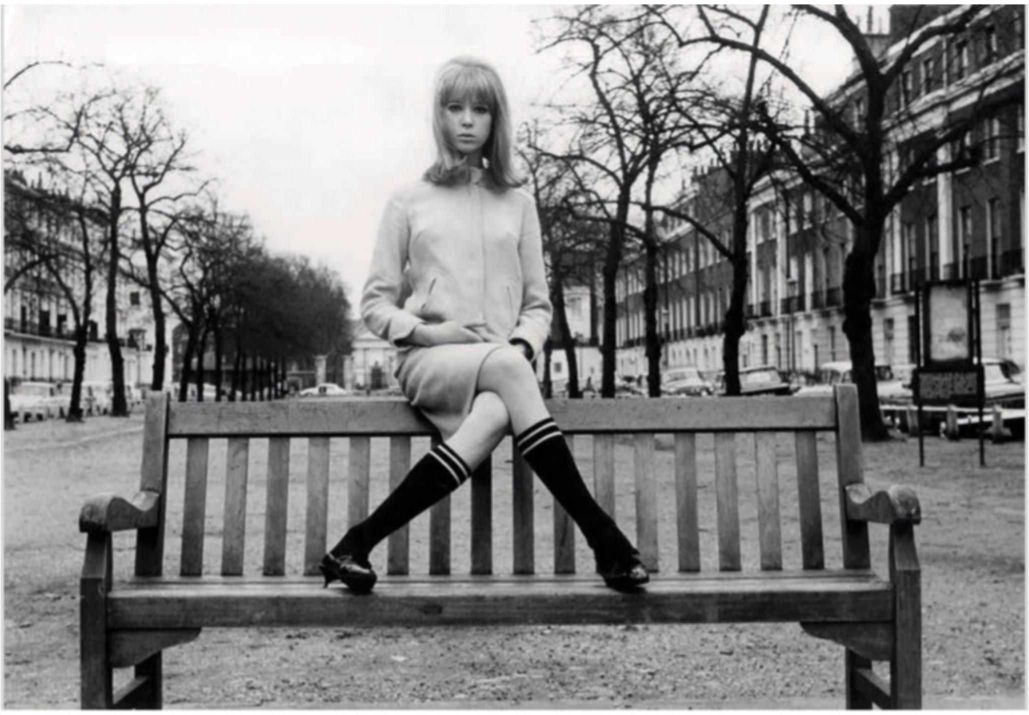
Final Analysis

John Wade considers...

Pattie Boyd by Michael Ward, 1964

If you can remember the 1960s, you weren't really there. It's an old joke that referred to the way illegal substances popular at that time could lead to confusion over what was real and what was not. Well, I was 14 in 1960, too young to partake of such substances, but old enough to understand I was on the cusp of the best ever decade in which to come of age.

The 1960s were a time when young people developed their own voice, no longer taking the lead from parents when it came to fashions, music and general way of life. It was the age of The Beatles, miniskirts, mods and rockers, Mini Coopers, *Blow-Up*, winning the World Cup, the moon landing, James Bond, hippies, flower power, Christine Keeler, Alf Garnett, Michael Caine in *Alfie*, Monty Python, The Rolling Stones, Twiggy and *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*.



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New breed

It was also the time when I bought my first copy of AP, price 1s 3d (about 6½p), where I became acquainted with a new breed of photographers.

Previously, fashion photography had been the domain of slightly aristocratic photographers like Norman Parkinson (whose work, don't get me wrong, I still admire), who used large format cameras to shoot aloof-looking models in elaborate studios or exotic locations. Now, onto the scene came the likes of David Bailey, Terrence Donovan and Brian Duffy, who dared to shoot on 35mm and whose models looked more like glamorous versions of the girl next door.

I confess I wasn't aware of Michael Ward at that time, but having since caught up with his work, I've discovered a documentary photographer whose work embraced everything from fashion to war zones with a talent for encapsulating the essence of a person, place, era or situation in a single shot. Which is exactly what he has done here.

Pattie Boyd was what, in less politically-correct days, we called a dollybird. I and every teenage schoolboy I knew was in love with her, though we had to admit to punching above our weight when she first married Beatle George Harrison, who wrote his song *Something* about her, then later married rock guitar legend Eric Clapton, who wrote *Layla* and *Wonderful Tonight* in her honour. She was, incidentally, also a good photographer whose pictures taken during those heady times now command big money.

> **'Ward could encapsulate the essence of a person, place, era or situation in one shot'**

But back to this picture. Look at the way Pattie has been posed slap-bang in the centre of the frame, on a bench, in the middle of what I guess is a London street, not sitting in any conventional way, but perched precariously on the back, her legs gangly, slightly awkward but nonetheless attractive, her innocent, slightly surprised and very direct gaze aimed straight at the camera.

This is what Michael Ward was so good at. Was the picture planned? Did he know about this bench and purposely take Pattie straight to it? Or was it, as I suspect, the result of wandering around for an hour with the model, looking for interesting locations and props and coming across the bench and its location? At which point the professionalism of both model and photographer ensured that everything instinctively fell quickly into place. Whatever the actual circumstances, it's a picture that sums up to perfection what we called the Swinging Sixties. It could have been taken during no other decade.

John Wade is best known for his regular contributions to AP on classic cameras. He is the author of 25 books on social and photographic history. Find him at **www.johnwade.org**

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